

WILFULL
IMPENITENCY
THE GROSSEST
SELF-MURDER.

All they who are guilty of it, apprehended,
tryed, and condemned in these Sermons.

Preached at *Rochford* in *Essex* not long before
his death, by that able, faithfull, and laborious
Minister of Jesus Christ, *Mr. William Fenner, B.D.*
and made publick by one of his unwor^d
thy fellow-labourers.

Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26.

*Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out my
hand, and no man regarded: but ye have set at naught all my coun-
sell, and would none of my reproof, I will also laugh at your calamity,
and mock when your fear cometh.*

Joh. 5. 40, 43.

*And ye will not come to me that ye might have life. I am come in my
Fathers name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his
owne name, him ye will receive.*

*Velle meum Domine misericordia tale est de redeundo ad te, quale est velle
tuum de mea ad te reversione. Guil. Paris. de Rhetor. Div. c. 143*

Quid agis liberum? Breviter respondeo, salvatur.

Bern. de Lib. Arb. & Gr.

Non velle in causa est, non posse pretenditur. Sen.

L O N D O N,

Printed by J. G. for J. R. and are to be sold by *William
Gilbertson*, at the Bible in *Giltspur-street*, 1656.

WILLIAM IMPERIAL

THE GOSPEL
ST. JAMES UNDER

All they who are guilty of in apparel and
and and and in the same.

Preached at Exeter in 1770 not long before
the death of the late Bishop of Exeter, and was
a paper of the City of Exeter, and was
and and and in the same.

and and and in the same.

and and and in the same.

and and and in the same.

and and and in the same.

To the Right Honourable, **ROBERT RICH,**

Baron of *Leez* in *Essex*, and Earle of *Warwick*:

Abundance of Spirituall Blessings in *Iesus Christ*.



Paul being upon a Propheticall wing, (for the Lord had poured upon him, not onely an *Apostolicall*, but a *Propheticall spirit*) doth foretell in *2 Tim. 3. 1.* that in the last dayes *perillous times* should come; those who are full of carnall self-love and unthankfulnesse, will much encrease the danger of this last age of the World; (the Lord root up all such weeds out of our hearts.)

*This know also
(saith he)
there's the in-
fallible cer-
tainety of it:*

God hath, I hope, given your Honour such a measure of love to the Publique, and so active a spirit to doe good to others, as will help to lessen the danger of these evill times. And I would be so thankfull for favours received, that I might not be ranked among this dishonourable Catalogue which here *Paul* sums up, of such as make bad times worse.

It is your Honours happinesse and advantage (as it was once said of the Duke of *Guise* in *France*, that he did put obligations upon all) that you can engage very many; and amongst the rest, I must ever acknowledge my selfe one, who in one of the greatest turnings of my life, by the good hand of God upon me, in your free consent and noble bounty, have had so much comfort, in the nearest and dearest relation, that I never envied any other, but find matter of everlasting praises to God for his goodnesse to my selfe therein. And being under so great obligations, when I can produce nothing of my own worthy your acceptance, I take leave to act the part of a Midwife to this happy Birth which may call your Honour Father, as will appear by the following Letter, that it was ultimately intended for your spirituall advantage; and it were now a kind of sacriledge to keep that holy Issue from you, that is so much your own. It joyes the souls of me and many more of

*Prov. 30. 16;
11, 12.*

B b b

your

The Epistle

your praying servants, that they have so much occasion to praise their God on your behalfe, for so many able and faithfull Ministers of the Gospell, of the first, second, and third magnitude, that your prudent fatherly care hath fixed, where you as Patron have been trusted.

Oh the many Chariots and Horsemen of Israel, that your Noble Father and you have brought triumphantly into Essex! (herein you did happily *Patrizare*;) the Lord continue the like care to build and repaire his House, in those who survive you from generation to generation, that so your House may still be honourably supported.

Ecclesiasticall Story speaks of one *Henricus Auceps*, when he did fight against the Hungarians, made this vow to God, That if the Lord would give him victory against his enemy, he would purge his Country from Simony, which at that time mightily abounded therein. We want men of such an heroicall zealous disposition in *England*.

2 Kings 13.
24. &c.

Oh that all Patrons were more mindfull of their high trust; then they would not so often betray the souls of people by putting off a friend &c. with a Living to some unworthy Chaplain. Doubtlesse there is many a damned creature roaring in Hell, cursing covetous Patrons as well as unfaithfull Pastors; for whose Bloud (in part at least) they must be accountable to the Father of spirits, and judge of quick and dead. A most heavy reckoning, when the sinnes of so many Congregations, to which Patrons are accessary by sending ignorant and scandalous Ministers amongst them, are made theirs; whereas the least of their own sinnes unrepented of, will sink them eternally.

God who is faithfull, will not forget your labour and cost of love to the truly reverend man of God, Mr. *Hooker*, (who is now singing Hallelujahs in heavenly Mansions) when he was persecuted by the * *Archi-flamen* of *Canterbury*. He will pay abundantly for the protecting and nursing his Children, *Heb. 6. 10.*

* There are many of great reading, who will undertake

to make it appear, that as Heathenish Feasts *Bacchanalia* & *Saturnalia*, &c. were turned into Christmas and such other Feasts, hoping thereby to win Heathens to Christ: so were *Archi-flamens* and *Flamines* changed into *Arch-prelates* and *prelates*, out of a good intention.

Dedicatory.

I know not how better to expresse my deep sense of your most reall favour (the comfort whereof I daily enjoy) then by taking the humble boldnesse to beseech your Honour to adde one thing more, which indeed is the *unum necessarium*, whereby you will gain that *better part*, which shall not be taken from you; Namely, that you would study and pray that you may walk in the light and heat of that glorious Gospel-constellation (for *Ministers are Stars*, and the **Angels of the Churches*) which you have endeavoured to fixe in your Orbe. Your Honour hath been so often at Sea, and there beholding the wonders of God in the deep, have been taught to wrestle with him for mercy. It is an old saying, *He that would learn to pray, let him goe to Sea*. Besiege Heaven with your unwearied importunities, that the Ark of the Gospel, which you have provided for thousands, may be your own everlasting Sanctuary. And that your feasting upon their dainties, may be fat and flourishing in your last dayes, standing stedfast in these shaking times, and immoveable, keeping faith and a good conscience (which too many having put away, concerning Faith have made shipwreck) more and more abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Luke 10. 42.
Rev. 1. 20.

*So acknowledged by this Translators in the contents of the 2. Chap. of the Revel. They, it seems, did not think these Angels to be Prelates. *Qui nescit orare discat navigare,* Jonah 1. 5.

*This through the grace of Christ, shall
be the earnest Prayer of him who is,*

My Lord,

Your Honours most obliged Servant,

Thomas Hill.

1714

T O
THE RIGHT VVORSHIPFULL,
My much Honoured Friend,
Sir NATHANIEL RICH.



King. 13. 14.

Have been often thinking what to send to you; at last this Theme which I have lately treated of in the Pulpit came into my mind; its of infinite use and necessity, and a truth little examined, considered, or layed to heart, yet marvellous necessary for humiliation to all the children of God, and of great weight for the making the world guilty before God. I had ~~though~~ have sent it to my Lord of Warwick for his subscribe honres; and if you judge it profitable, after your perusal of it, to commit it unto him from me, you shall do well. I am sorry to heare of such a Worthies sicknesse or weaknesse; Now Elisha the man of God was fallen sick; the very words are able to strike through. The Lord lend you health, and strength, and peace, and comfort, and joy; it is not only matter of courtesie to pray for such as you are, but of debt, and our necessities and duties call for it, and mine more especially. The Lord be mercifull to me, and so many in raising you up, and make you plenus dierum, and securus in cœlum redire; that's all the hurt that I wish you: And so I commend you to the word of his power that is able to keep you, and rest

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

WILLIAM FENNER.

To the Christian Reader, who desireth to hold
fast the form of sound words in faith and love,
which is in *CHRIST JESUS*; and to advance
Free-grace above Free-will.



Most admirably wise and fatherly hath been the Lords care
of his Churches in all Ages; and when there were false
Prophets under the Old Testament, the Lord had his
Jeremiahs to confute them, whom he made a defended Jer. 1. 18.
City, an Iron Pillar, and Brazen wall against all oppo-
sition. When the Devil stirred up Hymencus, Philetus,
and others, to undermine the truths of the Gospel, in the times of the New
Testament, the Lord raised and accomplished his Pauls to confound them. 1 Tim. 2. 16.
Rev. 12. 15.
16.
You shall finde when the Churches of Christ are in a wilderness con-
dition, and the Serpent casts out of his mouth waters as a flood after the
woman (that is, multitudes of unsound and Heretical opinions,) the earth
helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed the flood which
the Dragon cast out of his mouth: that is, Jesus Christ had those here
that did encounter and overthrow all false Doctrine, with which the de-
vil by his agents endeavoured to poyson and destroy the Churches. Thus
it was in the four generall Councils, namely, that of Nice, when Arrius
a Presbyter of Alexandria denying that the Son of God was consub-
stantial with the Father, and asserting that there was a time when he
was not, was confuted, and truth obtained a victory there, God stirring
up many learned men to oppose him. See learned M.
Nede in his
excellent Book
on the place.
And in the second, that of Constantinople, when there was a Mace-
donius who called the Holy Ghost a creature, many were able by the po-
wer of truth to confound him. 1. About A.D.
330:
under Constan-
tine the great,
vixm.
And the third, when a Nestorius, who denied that the Virgin Mary
could be called the Mother of God, Providence ordered it so that then a
Council of learned Bishops and Elders at Ephesus should blast that opini-
on. And when an Eutiches (who in a different way from Nestorius, who
denied the personal Union of two Natures in Christ) would have the im-
mensity of the Divine nature in Christ, and that there was onely the Di-
vine nature in him, another Council at Calcedon overthrew him. 1. About A.D.
384. under
Theodosius.

3. About A.D.
490. under
Theodosius the
second,
not 38076-
x@, but xec-
56x@.
About A.D.
456. under
Marianus
Calced on.
Cent. 3.
Thus God had variety of Champions, to contest with the most subtile
and prevailing adversaries, from hand to hand; particularly, when there
was Manes & Manichæi, who rejected the old Testament, and affirmed
that man fell not by voluntary defection, but of necessity, because mans
body was made of the Prince of darknesse (wherewith Austin was leaven-
ed before his conversion) The Lord had Chrysostom and others to hin-
der the spreading and prevailing of it.

To the Christian Reader.

Cent. 4.

Cent. 5.

*Dempster ex
Wafida refert,
eodem die
quo ille in An-
glica natus, te-
nebras errorum
toto mundo offu-
dit, summū Ec-
clesiæ lumen Au-
guſtinum in
Africa emicu-
iſſe. About A.
D. 418.
Note.*

*Damnata ante-
quam nata Ar-
minii opinio.*

*Wise learned
Arch-Bi. ſhew
moſt excellent
diſcourſe of
free-will in his
anſwer to the
Jeſuits cha-
llenge.
About A.D.
529.*

When there was an Arrius, who denied the Divinity of Chriſt, there ſhould be an Achanasius raiſed to overthrow him.

*When a Macedonius to oppoſe the Holy Ghoſt, then a Baſil to break him.
When a Pelagius to advance Free-will into the Throne of Free-grace,
then God would raiſe up an Auſtin, (that great light of the Church in his
time) to depoſe that, and to reſtore this to its crown and dignity.*

*This Pelagius was born in Brittain the ſame day that Auſtine in
Africk, he was the firſt preſumptuous advancer of the pride of Free-
will. He did not think the grace of God to be neceſſary for the helping of
Free will, for good things in every act. This was condemned in the
councell of Carthage, wherein indeed to ſave himſelfe he did equivo-
cate in the word grace, acknowledging a naturall, an exciting, and af-
ter converſion an aſſiſting grace. This Doctrin was likewiſe condemn-
ed in the Synod of Paleſtina, 1200 yeers agoe, and therein Armini-
aniſm kild before it was born, by the ſtrength of that place, 2 Tim. 1.9.*

*This Pelagius had his Scholars, Julianus and Cæleſtinus. Jeſus
Chriſt would not then leave Auſtin without ſome Diſciples to conſlict
with thoſe (as Chryſoſtom had his Oecumenius, and Theophylaſt his
Pediſſequi, his followers) ſo was there a Proſper, and Hilary Arc-
latenſis, to encounter the old Maſilians, and Semipelagians in France.*

*And when there was a Fauſtus Regienſis (a moſt ſubtil advaſary) a
Biſhop who did cloſely defend Pelagianiſm in two Books of Free-will;
The Church ſhould have a Fulgentius, and Petrus Diaconus, and o-
thers to oppoſe him. Yea ſentence was then given againſt Pelagius and
Semi-pelagians, in the Councell of Oreng. In the generall, that
their opinions touching free-will and free-grace, were not agreeable to
the Catholick faith.*

*Further, about the yeer 850, one Johannes Scotus (not he which
wrote upon the Sentences with ſo much oppoſition againſt Thomas A-
quinas, but another) wrote a Book againſt Predeſtination, which the
Church of Leyden conſuted with a godly and learned book.*

*When Gottſchalculus, about the yeer, 849. ſpoke of Predeſtination
perilouſly, to wit, That thoſe who were predeſtinated to life, by the
decree of Gods predeſtination were forced to do well: and thoſe
who were predeſtinated to condemnation, were forced by the decree
of God to do evill, he was reſiſted by Hincmarus and other learned
men.*

*This infectious error Pelagianiſm ſpread in England, where it was
apt to take the deeper rooting, becauſe Pelagius himſelfe by birth was a
Britaine: But the Lord raiſed learned Bradwardine Arch-Biſhop of
Canterbury and ſome others to appeare in the cauſe of God, and of free-
grace, and to fortiſie the Churches againſt all Pelagians, whom Au-
ſtin calls Inimicos gratiæ dei, and Fulgentius, Vaſa iræ dei.*

*Afterwards the ſubtilty of the Serpent inſinuated himſelfe into the
Garden of the Church by the wiſd and learning of Fauſtus Socinus (ano-
ther Infaustus Fauſtus in Poland;) They who have opportunity to con-
ſult Socinus books de Miniſterio, and the Catechiſmus Cracoviensis,*

(a

To the Christian Reader.

(a most subtil and dangerous book) shall finde there the seeds of Arminianisme, their Helena, there to be conceived (how ever Molina and other Popish Authors contend, as once the seven Cities did whose Homer was) their Media Scientia. They will grant a Divina Præscientia, but deny decretum Divinum to passe upon all things, leaving the will to its selfe to produce its own acts, which indeed is no less then a degree of Atheisme, setting up the second cause into the Throne of the first. Herein, and in divers other things the Arminians do tread in their steps, as will appeare to those who examine Peltius his book the Harmony of the Socinian and Arminian Doctrine. I wish that book were in English; it would make many blush now a dayes to see how incogitantly (I hope that is the worst in many) they have run themselves into the Tents of Socinians & Arminians, and know not now how honourably to retreat.

Peltius his harmony of Socinian and Arminian Note.

About the yeere 1570. when Petrus Baro a French man, had infected Cambridge with this disease from France, (you see spirituell as well as bodily evils have come from France) and one Mr. Barret, who acted concurrently with him: but then God giving the Heads of Colledges with the Vicechancellor a prudent Zeale to oppose it, they sent up Dr. Tindal and Dr. Whitaker, to complaine to Arch-Bishop Whitgift, which began that Usefull Book of 'Articuli Lambethani.*

Vide M. Print Aantiarmin.

* Soone after this journey Dr. Whitakers

blessed soul returned to her eternal rest, having not long before in an admirable Consilio ad gloriam led his *Cygnus Cantio* discovered and confuted the chief points of Arminianisme.

The Leaven came then into the Netherlands, and (as learned King James saith) Arminius was the first that infected Leyden with the Pelagian Heresie.* He was a strong and cleare parted man; and as it is said of Origen, Ubi bene nemo melius, ubi male nemo pejus; so there are some excellent discourses in his Workes, and others as desperately opposite to the Covenant of Grace, spattering all the links of the Golden chaine of our salvation, which is the great evill of Arminianisme; From a young student, Junius presaged of him, that he would be a very usefull, or most pernicious instrument in the Church of Christ. By this Junius (when the Lord had converted him from Atheisme, by reading the beginning of the first Chapter of the Gospel of John, wherein he saw such Majesty, that he thought that the Lord did therein detonare ab alto) the Lord gave a soveraigne antidote to his Church in those parts, against the infection of Arminianisme. As about the same time, by that glorious light, Mr. Perkins in England, whom the Lord made a Malleus both of Papists and Arminians, and by more cleare and condescending discoveries of Christ, made the deep mysteries of speculative, and the heavenly secrets of Practicall Divinity, to meet in the Pulpit; and all this in a little time; (for he lived but about 44. yeares, being born (ni fallor) in the first, and dyed in the last of Queen Elizabeths reign. Oh how much did he in a little time?

* Pelagianism oft called Heresie. Vide Dr. Yeates's preface to his Pelag. Rest.

But still the Devill will be casting weeds into Christs garden, picking up those that have been rooted out, and throwing them over the wall againe.

Now

To the Christian Reader.

As the name
Protestants
given first to
the Princes
and free cities of
Germany that
sought Reformation in the
Diet at Spira
A.D. 1529.
and from
them passed to
us and other
countries
where it was
effected.

Synod of Dort
A.D. 1618.

Now be made use of Barneveldt in Holland, to bring Religion to serve State purposes, and so carried on the Arminian designe there. These differences about the power of Free-will, and such things as hang upon that (for there is the Primum movens) now came to be reduced to five Articles, which begate the conference at Hague, betwixt both parties; which is reported both by Brandius and Bertijs.

About this time came up the name of Remonstrants, as the name Protestant had formerly. Whereupon Dr. Ames (once Fellow of Christs Colledge in Cambridge, but in Dr. Caries time then Master of that place, it grew too hot for him, he not complying with the present ceremonies, and having Preached a Sermon at the University Church against playing at cards, which would not then be born) was by the disposing hand of divine Providence carried into those parts, where (as the Austin of that time and place) he did grapple with all the Patrons of Free-will. And as an Appendix to that conference at Hagu, (as it is set forth by Brandius) writ that most excellent book of his Coronis. But still Arminius his disciples acted to their utmost. Bertijs, Grevinconius, and others, so distracted those Churches, that there was a necessity of calling a Synod, which God gave them as a happy remedy, An. Dom. 1618.

Oh the unwearied activity of adversaries to the cause of Christ! (which should make others blush to move so heavily in asserting the doctrine of Free-grace) before we could understand what the Anti-remonstrants in the Synod at Dort fully intended, we had from the Remonstrants A^{ca} Synodalia, a book indeed that required an Ames to answer it (which he hath done most learnedly) where you have Magnum in Parvo, a great soul in a little body, a great deale of form in a little matter (as in his Bellarminus enervatus) that being done by the Fraternity with concurrent endeavours and quintessence of the best wits amongst the Remonstrants.

About the yeere 1627. Mr. Montague a man of great learning, and being backed by the then potent D. of Buckingham, opened his Arminian (and I had almost said Popish) pack, when the Lord used Bishop Carleton, Doctor Featly, Doctor Preston, and others, as happy Instruments to discover his adulterate wares.

Lately there sprung up a new brood of such as did assert Arminianisme, as Dutch Tompion fellow of Clare-Hall, Mr. Will. Chappel fellow of Christs Coll. as the many Pupils that were Arminianized under his tuition-shew, (whether by him or no, he best knows) but men are more confirmed in their suspicion hereof, since they heard of his answerable actings in the University in Irel. but still as in Oxford, when there was any danger of spreading Armin. whether in A^{ss}s, Books, or Sermons, they had there Robert Abbot, Twisse, Prideaux, and other works to suppress them: So in Cambridge God gave us lately Davenant and Ward, who did victoriously enter the lists with the most confident adversaries of Free-grace. And that bitter weeds could never take deep rooting in any of these three kingd. and thrive very fruitfully; there was in Ireland a most learned Arch. Bishop Usher to crush it there, and a mighty man in these

To the Christian Reader.

these Controversies, Doctor Twisse (another Austin) to suppress it in England. As learned and industrious M. Rutherford and others have done their parts successfully in Scotland. But alas Arminius now appears amongst us, not so much in the Schooles and Pulpits, as in popular meetings.

who were called
prima magni-
tudine.

For as Zanchius complained with much regret of the Lutheran Ubiquitaries, that he found them ubique, every where to vex and molest him, so may we grieve, (O that we could with brokenness of heart bewaile it) that our Universalists, are almost universally spread amongst us; It is gotten into our Netherlands, much into the feyny and moorish parts of this kingdome, yea amongst many people that love Jesus Christ, and therefore entertaine it, as conceiving it most for his Honour (the more are they to be pittied, and to be instructed with a spirit of meekness; shew them by Scripture-evidence this is not Gods way of advancing Christ, and you recover them) it is now in Popular hands, we need such worthies as the Author of this following Treatise (blessed be the Father of mercy, the Fountain of every good and perfect gift, for his and many others fruitfull labours) who may condescend to parley with poore Christians at their Tables, in their shops, to follow them as the plow (as Reverend Mr. Greenham was wont to do) endeavouring to rectifie and reduce them.

1 Tim. 2. 14.

He knew how to deale wisely with subtile adversaries, that he might have the more advantage against them, grants them as much as he could with consistency to his own principles, that so he might the more easily confound theirs; only you will be so candid as to consider that herein he speaks ad populum; And therefore as the ancient Fathers, often use the liberty of speaking like a Preacher, rather then as a Doctor of the Chaire.

Proverbia,
non doctus
ludat.

I reckon this a very strong argument to confute the power of Free-will to any spirituell action in a gracious manner, the wofull experience of mine owne wretched heart, being naturally so desperately wicked, opposite to any spirituell good. But this will not convince others; only by the way I would know how it comes to passe, if Arminius Doctrine be true, that we have Free-will, to choose that which is truly good, why Arminians are not all very good men? Will not this be an aggravation against them at the dreadfull day of judgement?

Jer. 17. 9.
Note.

Note.

Therefore the Lord is most admirably gracious in giving us such Masters of the Assemblies to fasten such Scripture-truths as may hold us fast and close under the Covenant of Grace.

Eccles. 12. 11.

He was a blessing to the Colledge where he was fellow, of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge (which hath been a fruitfull nursery to this Church, and an ornament to the University) and after a burning and shining light in Staffordshire. He delighted much in preaching in an Evangelicall way from place to place, as pittying many poor pining seduced soules under blind and superstitious Ministers. The Lord fill their hearts with compassion to them, who have power in their hands to supply them, that so millions do not perish for want of wisdom.

John 5. 35.

Willingworth

at the end of

To the Christian Reader.

Afterwards the noble Earl of Warwick fixed him at Rochford in Essex, where he did speak and do great things to the honor of Free-grace. He lived there more by acting vigorously to his great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in a few yeares, then most of us his Brethren do in many.

It is not enough loqui magna, unless we do magna vivere, as Erasmus.

O that we who are left behind in these conflicting times, could more punctually and closely follow his example: It is not studying the groundlesse fopperies of Popery, nor the immersing our minds wholly into some dry disputes concerning some externalls and formes about Religion, (as too many do now adayes being engaged in a party) that will spiritualize us or our hearts, so much as Studying and Preaching over the Covenant of Grace; The mysterious and heavenly secrets of the Gospel rightly, openly and wisely applyed, will by Gods blessing breed a Gospel spirit in thee, leave a gracious tincture upon the spirits of Teachers and Hearers; whereas possibly for want of this, there may be a legall tartness and severity in the Spirits and Tongues of able and good men.

The gracious and powerfull Lord who only teacheth to profit, annoynt all his Saints with that holy unction that they may be able to discern of things that differ, clearly to distinguish betwixt truth and error. And that he may to this and other happy purposes, blesse abundantly this favourly, acut, and solid Treatise, (shall be the earnest Prayer of him,

Who is thine in and for the Lord Jesus,

Thomas Hill.

VVILFULL IMPENITENCIE

The Grossest SELF-MURDER.

EZEK. 18. 31. 32.

For why will ye die, O ye house of Israel? &c.



He wicked in this Chapter disputes against God; The Fathers have eaten (swre grapes), and the childrens teeth are set on edge. Our Fathers have sinned, and we are punished: a common cavill in every naturall mans heart, when its urged. Adam fell, and his poor Posterity smart for it: If God will needs damn us, he may, we have no power for to help it: for who hath resisted his will? This is mans Syllogism. God, who might send man to hell for answer, answers calmly:

1. By abjuration. As I live, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion to use this Proverb any more in Israel, verse 3.
2. By an Assertion: The soul that sinneth, it shall die, verse 4. No soul shall die, but only the same that doth sinne.
3. By explication of himselfe: If a man doe that which is right, he shall live, verse 5, 6. If he have been never so wicked, yet if he returns, he shall not die, verse 31.
4. By appealing to their consciences: Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord, and not that he should returne and live, verse 23. Have I any pleasure? I appeale to all your consciences, Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?
5. By reserving: Heave now, O house of Israel, is not my way equal? &c. Are not your ways rather unequal? verse 25.
6. By a Conclusion: Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, saith the Lord, according to his wayes, verse 30.
7. By a small portion of the whole Canon: Repent and turn yourselves, &c. so iniquity shall not be your ruine: Cease to say, I will not sin, &c. For why will ye die, &c.

Where we have these four things:
1. God disclaims all cause of their damnation from his hand will: I have no pleasure in the death of him that doth wickedly, &c.
2. He removes all cause of their destruction from his revenged will: Repent and turn yourselves, &c. so iniquity shall not be your ruine: Cease to say, I will not sin, &c.
3. He disavows all cause of their destruction from his revenged will: though that were guilty, or necessary for a them, we have no colour why they are not wrought upon: Make you a new heart, &c.

The division of the Text.

Gods calm and sweet equanimity in particular, as in the division of the Text.

Four things very observable.

The fault lies not at his door; no, it lies at your door, *Make you a new heart.*

4. He casts all the cause of their destruction upon their own rebellious wills. *Why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

1. What is the cause you live in your sinnes, and die and perish in your sinnes? Is it because I am not mercifull? You know I am gracious, and full of mercy, and ready to forgive; why then, *why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

Israels
perdition not
from God
but from it self.

2. Is it because I am swift to revenge? you know I am slow to anger, and give you a warning before I consume you; why then *will ye die, O house of Israel?*

3. Is it because I will destroy you for *Ahaz*, or *Manasse*, or *Zedekiah*, or *Adams* sinne, *quasi canis peccatum suu dependet*? you know that if the Son walk not in the Fathers sinne, I use to receive him, you can bear me witness; I call you to a new covenant: *Why then will ye die, O house of Israel?*

Rev. 13. 8.
Joh. 3. 16.

4. Is it because ye have no Saviour? You know that the Lamb of God Christ Jesus was slain for you from the beginning of the world, that you may be saved upon faith.

5. Is it because ye have no power? ye know I offer you grace and power, and ye will not have it: *Why then will ye die?*

Id unum was
accusat, respicio-
re non vultis.

6. Some Authors alledge five *why's* more. *Why will ye, &c.* Is it for this cause, or that cause, or that? Or what cause is it? No cause on Gods side; no, ye may thank your own wills if you perish; this, this only accuseth you, you will not be ruled: you are careless of God, Christ, Grace, and you will be so; ye are vain, and carnall, and be obstinate, and ye will be so. *Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem; wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be? Jer. 13. 27.* He does not say, *Woe unto thee Jerusalem, canst thou not be made clean?* but *wilt thou not be made clean?*

Presuppositions not to be mistaken.

1. *Presupposition*
not to be mis-
ken.

Lites aliquot
non possit gra-
am adipisci qui
reprobatur a
deo; tamen
quod in hoc vel
illud peccatum
labatur, ex ejus
libero arbitrio
contingit, unde
per meritum sibi
in culpam impu-
satur. Aq. par.
1. qu. 3. Art. 3.
resp. tertium
Arg. 23.

1. It's true, that a wicked man cannot repent, nor be converted of himselfe; but this cannot, does not hinder him. If a wicked mans cannot did hinder him, he might excuse himselfe before the *Tribunall of Christ*; *Lord, thou knowest I did my best*, I would have been ruled by thy word, but I could not; I would have been humbled and reformed better then I was, but I could not: If a wicked mans cannot did hinder him, he might excuse himselfe thus: But alas, he is not able to say thus, without *peremptory lying*; Lord, I could not choofe but doe wickedly: I acted most wretchedly, but I could not otherwise choofe. Though it was not in thy power not to be born in original sinne, yet who necessitated thee to commit such grosse actual sinnes? In *Prov. 1. 29*, they hated knowledge, they did not choofe the feare of the Lord. They did not use any liberty of will to choofe that which was good. What, was it because they could not? No, for albeit they could not, yet that was not the cause: No, They would none of my counsell, they despised all my reproof, verse 30. Mark; The reason why they did not choofe, was not because they could not choofe, but because they would not.

a. *Presup.*

It's true, God doth not give them power to believe, and to be renewed but can they say, Though I would seriously, God would not? were they able to say thus? Though I desired heartily, God would not give me grace; then they had some colour to cast it upon God: I would, but God would not. But they cannot cast it upon him. How often would I have gathered thee together even as the Hen gathereth her chickens, but thou wouldst not, I would, said God; but you would not; nay, How often would I but you would not? *Matth. 23. 37.* Though God be not so willing as to give them all power to believe and be saved; yet he is *aforehand* with them.

3. *Presup.*

It's true, if the wicked should will as far as they are able to will, yet their will were not able to do it; but this doth not excuse them, because God al-

ways

wayes resolved to be *afordhand* with them. Indeed, as in *Matth. 25. 29.* God gives his servants this rule by which he ever goes towards them, *Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance*; speaking of things in *eadem genere.* But to apply it to a man in the state of nature, is to say, Grace is given according to works: which is the very *dogma* of Pelagianism. Yet however, all this is a most *encouraging* intimation. Let any man use the power that God gives him, and he shall have more; as he that takes pains for *Learning*: As he that useth meanes to increase his *estate*, may find in ordinary providence, that *the hand of the diligent makes rich.* He that useth a penny well, makes it *two pence*; he that useth two pence very well, makes it a *groat.*

Mar. 25. 29.

Facienti quod in se est, deus faciet quod in se Pelagia. Et Prov. 10. 4. & 10. 12.

So that, though there be not such an *Infalibilis nexus*, that God hath bound himself in the use of our *naturall abilities* to adde *supernaturall graces*; yet undoubtedly he will never be wanting to promote any good work, till men neglect or contemn. And this leaves men wholly without excuse, and shewes, it is not *their cannot*, but their *will not*, which betrays them to their *spirituall losses*; namely, their *wisfull rejecting* of Gods gracious offers.

It's true, God gives the wicked but *one Talent*, when he giveth his children *four, two at the least*; but they cannot say, he is *unjust*, reaping where he sowed not, gathering where he sowed not. No, There's the same proportion between *one Talent*, and gathering *one more*, as there is between *two*, and the gathering of *two others* &c.

4 Presup.

You know that they are ready to complaine, as *Christ* shewes it in the *Parable.* Lord I know that thou wast an *hard man*, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not sowed: But ye remember also the Lords answer, *Thou wicked and slothfull servant, &c. Mat. 25. 26.* Marke, he casts the blame upon his *wisfulness*; that he would not take pains for to trade. So the wicked complaine, Alas, God hath not sown any power of conversion in my heart, and will he look for to reap it? This is, *unserenesse* and *hardnesse* of dealing. Oh thou wicked and slothfull servant, &c. Why didst thou not trade with the *Talent* that I gave thee? One Talent should beget one, as well as two beget two, &c. But I gave thee *wis*, and thou buriedst it in the *earth*, and hast been *careless* with it. I gave thee *knowledge*, and thou hast hid it in the earth, and not traded for reformation according to it, &c. Alas, thou canst not plead a *cannot*, but only a *will not.*

It's true, that if one wicked man will be more willing than another, it is not from himself but from God. For what hast thou that thou hast not received? 1 Cor. 4. 7. Its God that maketh one wicked man to differ from another in *goodnesse*, and to be better than another. One wicked man is a *drunkard*, and another is better, &c. One wicked man is more *wisfull*, another is less. Its God that makes this difference; yet notwithstanding its his own fault, that he is not so good as his neighbour, especially when he sits under better helpes than his neighbour. The men of *Niniveh* shall rise up against this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of *Jonah*, and behold, a greater than *Jonah* is here. See, this generation was worse than *Niniveh*; *Niniveh* repented a great way, even in sackcloth and ashes; but this generation doth not. I grant, it was God that did make them doe more than this generation doth doe. For all would be alike *wisfull*, if it were not for him. But yet this generation cannot plead in judgement, Lord, thou wast not so gracious unto us, as to *Niniveh*; No, *Jesus Christ* expressly telleth them, *Niniveh* shall rise up in judgement against them, *q. d. Niniveh* was not so *wisfull* as you: *Niniveh* would, but you would not. Our *Saviour Christ* ascribes it to their *wisfulness*, that they were not so willing as *Niniveh*; *Niniveh* would, but you would not. That you see the *suppositions*, which I beseech you remember as we goe, lest perhaps you misheard.

5 Presup. 1 Cor. 5. 7.

Mar. 14. 41.

The reason why the wicked doe not repent nor come out of their sinnes, is not this.

Doct.

A&S. 3.

cause they cannot (though they cannot) but because they will not. Peter saith to Ananias, Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the holy Ghost, to keep back part of the price of the land? Was it not once in thy power? Before thou didst promise, 'twas in thy power whether thou wouldst promise or no; did any force thee to promise? and when thou hadst promised, did any squeeze the lie out of thy tongue, that thou shouldst tell a lie to the Holy Ghost? did any drag thy fingers to the money, and force thee to handle it? No, thou wouldst lie, and thou wouldst finger it.

Seven Demonstrations to prove this.

1 Demonst.

1 The wicked think they have power to repent.

Prov. 6. 10.
All the fre will mongers reason why they do not repent, is because they will not. Out of their own mouth will God condemn them.

Luk. 23. 40.

1. The wicked think they have power, and yet they will not doe according to their thoughts. What's the reason they presume to repent another time, but because they think they have power? what's the reason they hope to repent on their death beds, but because they think they have power; or at least, that they are able to beg power of Christ Jesus? Now by their own thoughts God will convince them, that they doe not give over their sinnes, because they will not; like the sluggard, *Tell a little more sleep, yet a little more slumber, yet a little more folding of the hands to sleep*; the sluggard, he thinks he can rise time enough, and doe all his businesse ere night, though he lie a little longer, and therefore does he presume to lie a while longer: So thou art loath to come out of thy sinnes yet, time enough yet, thinkst thou; thou hast secret thoughts, thou art able to shift for Heaven afterwards; Tush, an unhappy youth may make a good old man, and a young Saint an old Devil: Hence it is that the whore-master can plead, Did not David commit adultery too? as though he could get up againe as well as he. The drunkard, was not Noah drunk? as though he were able to repent as well as he. The Thief on the Crosse, Did not he repent at last gaspe? as though he could shift as well at last: so they think they can leave off their sinnes for a need; and therefore the reason why they doe not, is only because they will not. He that thinks he hath a hundred pound of his own in his purse, and yet will not give a poor body a half penny: what's the reason he will not open his purse to give? because he cannot? No, he thinks he hath it, and can; but he will not; So the reason why thou art not reformed, is, thou wilt not.

2 Demonst.

2. They will not try.

Tentantes ad Trojem pervenire Grati. Theo.

2. Demonstration; because thou dost not so much as try whether thou canst or no. Therefore thou dost not stick at a cannot, but a will not; when a Master bids his servant carry a Sack of Corn to the Mill; he cannot, sayes he; but cannot you try, sayes his Master, cannot you goe about it? no, he will not try; why then he is wilfull; if his Master should see him sweating and striving to carry it, it were something, then he would say he stuck at a cannot; but when he will not be at the paines to try, he sticks at a will not. So thou stickst at a will not, thou dost not every day in *arenam descendere*, sweat at good duties, thou dost not study and labour every day to *shun all temptations*, and prevent all thy sins, thou dost not go about the cleansing of thy Family, the purging of thy House, thou wilt not go about it, and therefore the reason is, because thou wilt not. Nay its all one whether thou hast power yea or no. To what end should God give thee power? for thou wilt not use it. Nay, how dost thou know but when thou goest about it, thou mayest meet with some power? but thou wilt not try; cut down thy drunken sign, and try; never let drinking and swilling be in thy house, and try; set up constant holy conferences and try; frequent Prayer in thy Closet, and try, &c. But I have tried againe and againe, and yet it will not do; every day try though, *si crebro jaceas aliquid, aliquid, jecur*, though thou hast thrown the Dye a hundred times, yet next time may be thou shalt throw a good cast. But thou wilt not try. I would have healed Rahel, but she would not be healed. The field of the Sodomites, all grown over with Thorns, and Nettles had covered all the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Prov. 24. 31. What's the reason he hath

hath not a good crop? because the ground would not bear it? No, how does he know? he will not try, he will not plow it, and harrow it, and weed it, and manure it, and sow it; he will not try, therefore, because he will not.

3. Demonstration. God offers thee many good motions of power: I will help thee, and I will enable thee, and thou wilt not be helped; God casts in these good motions, and thou casts them out. Stand ye in the waies, and so ask for the old paths, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your soules; but they said, We will not walk therein. O doe but ask for the good way, and labour to walk in it. He help you, and assist you; but we will not, say they. I set Watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet, but they said, We wil not hearken, ver. 17. This is plain English, as we say, you will not; ye have preaching every Sabbath, and every week, but ye will not; God sends you good motions every day and houre; but ye will not; when a beggar will not be helped, why does he starve? what because he cannot choose? no, he starves because he will starve. O sayst thou, I doe heare the Word, and I cannot heare it better; I doe pray daily, and I cannot pray better, &c. Thus thou retortest upon God, as the unprofitable servant, Lo, there thou hast that is thine: Lo, here's the best faith thy spirit helps me to, here's the best obedience that thy power enabled me to, &c. Lo, there thou hast that is thine, thou helpst me with no more, I was not able to do better; *quis est potest hoc dicere?* sayes Gualter, with what face canst thou say thus? is this all that God hath offered to enable thee? ah thou wilfull creature; The Lord hath offered to helpe thee to a thousand times more, but thou wouldst not be helped.

4 Demonstration. God hath not only offered thee power to do more, and thou wilt not take it, but also given thee more power; and thou wilt not use it, and therefore the reason why thou dost not, is because thou wilt not; God hath given thee one talent of power at the least; why dost not thou put it out to the merchandizers and occupy with it? *ταλαυτορ ειδεν διδραμης*, sayes Chrys. The power that God hath vouchsafed thee is thy talent. Why didst not thou imploy it to the utmost? every Sermon gives thee a new power, a new price? so every good counsell gives thee a new power; what art thou better? every blessing thou hast had, gives thee a new power, wherein art thou purer? does God give thee but eyes? thou hast more power to glorifie him then he that hath none, &c. Every mercy helps thee with a new power; but wherein dost thou use it? God hath given thee a good memory, how hast thou stufed it? means and maintenance, how hast thou honoured God? why, &c. thine own conscience accuseth thee, thou hast wasted his goods, wasted them upon belly and back, which have devoured more thoughts then ever his worship could have, thou hast wasted them upon thy credit in the world, and thy pleasure, and thy lusts, and thy fleshly desires. How is it that I heare this of thee? Thou shalt heare one day of this dismall watch-word, Give account of thy stewardship, for thou mayst be no longer steward. What dost thou talking of thy want of power? I could not doe this, and I could not doe that; where are my goods that I lent thee? give account for thy memory. Lord, I remember this and that tale, this & that dawble; *thou wilt & unprofitable servants* thou, and why couldst thou not remember my Commandements as well? give account for thy wit. Lord I have contrived busineses, bargaines with it, I have jested, quipped, been merry with it; thou evill and unprofitable servant thou, why wouldst thou not be witty for God, and for the good of thy soul? &c. God hath given a great deale of power more then ever thou bringest to act, and therefore thou art wilfull.

5. Demonstration; the more power thou hast to repent, the more thy will is against it. The more meanes that God doth vouchsafe, the more Preaching, the more knowledge, the more reproofs, the more enlightnings, the more power thou hast to repent, the more thy will is against it. Bernard sayes, such a one is

3 Demon.
They refuse the help which God offers.

Jer. 4. 16;

Mar. 25. 25

4 Demon.
And will not use the power which he hath given.

Prov. 7. 12

Luke 16. 2

5 Demon.
They grow worse by the means.

Hof. 64.

a perverse man that God is faine to say to, *quid faciam tibi?* What shall I doe unto thee? O Ephraim; what shall I doe unto thee? for thy righteousness goes away like the dew. Hof. 6:4. The more meanes thou enjoyest, the more thy righteousness goes away; one would think the more the *Sun shine* of the Gospell ariseth, the more your righteousness should encrease; it goes the more away, like the dew the more the *Sun riseth*, the more it vanisheth away; many of you, the more Preaching you have, the farther ye are off; a man might be acquainted with you heretofore, but now that you have been soundly rebuked for your sinnes, the further you flye off: some of you that were somewhat forward heretofore, are mockers now; some of you that were somewhat towards heretofore, are more covetous, and wastifish, and Passionate, and Worldly: like the weeds, the more they are pluckt up, the more they doe grow; or like the earth, the more it is washed, the dirtier it proves: so the more meanes ye have to be enabled to good, the wilfuller ye are.

6 Demon.

There
cannot is
voluntary.
A Morall
impotency.

6. Demonstration; because *they cannot, is a voluntary cannot*; thou hast wilfully brought the most part of thy cannot upon thee. I cannot give to the poore sayest thou; yea, but thou hadst it once, and thou hast wilfully spent it; thou hadst Lands, and Meanes, and commings, in, but thou hast spent it at the Ale-house; thou hast consumed it on the game-house. Thus thy cannot, is a voluntary cannot, *causa causa est causa causati*: thy will was the cause of thy cannot, and therefore thy will, is the acuse of thy not giving to the poore. I cannot read, sayes one, and no marvaile if I be ignorant; but thy Parents would have set thee to Schoole, and thou wouldst be a trewant, therefore art willingly ignorant; I cannot remember a Sermon, sayes another, no wonder though I repeat it not in my Family but forget it as I do: but thou hast willingly ram'd it with matters of the World, or hast weakned it with drinking, and therefore thou art wilfully forgetfull, &c. The unprofitable servant was curst that had layd up his pound safe in a Napkin: he did not lessen it, nor imbezele it, but only layd it up, and yet he was curst because he did not διπλαῖν περισσεύειν, sayes Chrysost. he was curst because he did not double his pound; ah the woful estate that thou art in; if he were accursed that did lay up his pound, what shall become of thee that dost lessen it? he did not double his abilities, and therefore he was cursed; thou dost not only not double thy abilities, but thou dost lessen them. God hath inabled thee to do many a thing, and now thou art not able, thou hast willingly lessened thine ability; now then thou canst not excuse thy self that thou canst not, because thou hast brought this cannot on thy self: Thou canst not weep at a Sermon, but thou couldst once, thou canst not resist such a lust, but thou couldst once, and thou hast willingly brought this cannot on thy soul, and therefore this is all the cause, because that thou wilt not.

Luke 19. 20.
Chrysost.

7 Demon.

They are
contented
with their
cannot.

Jer. 5. 31.

7. Demonstration. May be thou canst not; yea, but thou art contented with thy cannot; thou canst not be holy, and thou art contented not to be; thou canst not crucifie thy lust, and thou art contented with this cannot, nay thou wouldst not be able. Sir, I tell you how you may put up this injury if you will; but Sir you shall not make me put it up; I will not be directed by you, as it was with desperate Judah, my people love to have it so. Thou art carnal, and thou lovest to be so; were a man in the stocks, and not able to get out, yet if he be contented to be there though he cannot get out, that is not the reason of his staying, but he will not; thou canst not walk humbly and holily, and thou lovest to have it so; what would you have me so pure forsooth? So then the reason is because that thou wilt not; if thy will were not it, thou wouldst never be content with thy cannot; the Congregation is bad, and thou lovest to have it so, the more custome thou shalt have for thy Ale-house, like a bad Clarke of the Assizes, I heard one speak it my self, he was glad there was so many Rogues, he had the more money; so some of you are glad there be so many

ny frequenters of the Ale-house, ye have the more custome, ye love to have it so, ye cannot reforme the sinners if any another, and ye love to live it so.

The *Presuppositions* premised, and the *Demonstrations* prefixed, it followes now that I lay down the ground of this necessary truth; (Sail.)

The reason why a wicked man doth not turn unto God; is not because he cannot, (though he cannot) but because he will not.

He cannot say this at the day of Judgement; Lord, thou knowest I left every sin that I could, and I took all the best courses that I could to become a new creature, but I could not. A wicked man shall not be able to say thus without lying. The man in the Gospel that had not on the wedding garment, could he say, Lord, I was not able to go to the shop of the Gospel to seeke one? No, he was speechlesse, *Matth. 22. 12.* God finds out the hypocrite, though but once, and when once discovered, he is confounded and silenced with the guilt of his own wilfulness.

The first Ground.

The first Ground is this, which is observed by our learned Divines at the Synod at Dort, namely,

Every man can do more good then he does, and shun more evil then he does; though I confesse not in a gracious manner. If I can prove this to be true, it will necessarily follow, that the reason why a wicked man does not returne, is not because he cannot, but onely because he will not.

Arguments to prove it.

1. Consider, if a man can do more good then he doth; nothing can hinder him from doing more then he does but *his will*; when the fire can burne more, it doth burne more, because it hath no will to come between the power of burning and the act of burning to suspend it. The fire is a naturall agent, and therefore burnes as much as it can: but a man is a *voluntary agent*, and therefore when he can do a thing and does not, 'tis because his will comes between to suspend it. So that the reason is this, *he will not.* Pilate he had power to crucifie Christ, and power not to do it, *John 19. 10.* he had power not to do it: why then does he crucifie him? not because he had no power to do otherwise; he confesses himself he had power to do otherwise, but he crucified Christ, because he would do so. When a man hath power to do a thing, or not to do a thing, its the will that either suspends or determines.

2. Consideration; that if a man can do more then he does, and yet will not, he must needs voluntarily hinder himselfe from doing that which he cannot; the reason is, because a man must first do that which he can, before he can come to that part which he cannot. Suppose a lame man were to go to London from hence, and not able to go one mile of the journey, but there stands one at the Church-stile, that offers, if he will but crawl thither, to carry him; he is able to crawl so farre as the Church-stile, but he will not; does not he voluntarily hinder himselfe from going to London? that which he can do must be done first, before that which he cannot. So ye that live in your sinnes, you must first do that which you can, before you can look that God should help you to do that which you cannot. If thou dost all that thou canst for ought that thou knowest, Christ though he have not absolutely engaged himselfe, stands at the Church-stile, there ready to help thee. There be men in the world that are in need of help; thou dost not know but thou art the man. Christ hath not said thee any thing to the contrary, but onely he bids thee do what thou

Ans. 3. & 4. to
refus. 3. & error,
p. 11.

1. Consider.
Every man
can do more
good then
he doth.

2. Consider.

canst; canst not thou cut off thy long haire? are no Sizzers able to cut it? have not you a Tongue in your heads, ye that keep disorders in your Ale-houses? cannot you say, get you hence ye drunken companions, here's no entertainment for you? you must do that which you can; before you can expect Christs help to do that which you cannot; and if you will not do that which you can, you do voluntarily hinder your own selves from doing that which you cannot; *Josuah* could not stand before *Ai*, nor hinder a close *Achan* from taking the golden wedge; but when it was taken and known, he was able to make him an example. *Josuah* he fasted and cryed unto God all day untill night, that the Lord would mercifully save him and all *Israel*; Now heare that answer the Lord gives him, Get thee up sayth he, why lyeest thou here? *Iosh. 7. 13.* *Israel hath sined, go and execute Justice, go and do that first; and then I will answer thee about Ai*; for if *Josuah* would not have done what he could, the Lord would never have helpt him to do that which he could not. So thou prayest for mercy and grace, oh that God would convert thee, and pardon thee; get thee up sayes God, dost thou stand praying for mercy as long as such things and such things are not reformed? thou hast drunkenness in thy house, go and reforme that; thou art in league with a sort of base lusts, goe and reforme them; if thou wilt not do that which thou canst, how canst thou be sure God will help thee to do that which thou canst not? no thou stickest at a will not, as long as thou refuseth to do that.

3. Consider.

3. Consider if a man will not do that which he can, neither will he do that which he cannot, if he could; the servant that will not go five or six miles in a day which he can for his Master, neither would he goe a hundred miles for his Master if he could; you that can reforme outwardly, at least if you would, and yet will not, neither would you reforme more if you could; ye have money in your purses, cannot you spend it better then upon swilling and drinking and gaming? ye can well enough, but ye will not. So you would do, had you that true riches, *Luke 16. 11.* ye have naturall abilities; if ye will not be faithfull in them, so it would be if so be yee had better; ye that have morall and civill endowments, if ye will not be faithfull in them, neither would you if God should lend you more, &c. ye are able to avoid swearing and lying, but ye will not, neither would ye avoyd all other sinnes if ye could; if a man will not do that which he can, neither will hee do that which hee cannot, if he could.

4. Consider.

4. Consider, if a man will not do that which he can, can or cannot all's one to him, all sticks at his will. I cannot repent, and I cannot give over my finnes, sayest thou; and I pray thee who told thee that thou canst not? I am naked sayes *Adam*, and who told thee that thou wert naked? sayes God, *Gen. 3. 11.* So may I say, who told thee thou canst not? does not thy own conscience tell thee tis because thou wilt not? I cannot digge sayes the lazy Steward, and to begge I am ashamed, *Luke 16. 3.* I cannot digge; if he had a cudgell about his back, it would make him to digge; to begge I am ashamed, sayes he; he was not ashamed to cozen his Master of his goods, but he was ashamed to begge. I have married a Wife and I cannot come, *Luke 14. 20.* No, what did his Wife tie his legges? there is a Lyon in the way, I cannot goe out sayes the sluggard: alas thy owne sluggish wilfull wills are this cannot. Can or cannot all's one to them, they never come to try whether they can, yea or no: the sluggard never lookt out to see the Lyon in the way, but he dreamt there was one there, and he was willing to believe it, he would not go out to see: the idle Steward did not trie whether he could digge, yea or no; if he had taken the Spade in his hand, and gone about the work, 'twere another matter; but I cannot

the grossest Self-murder.

cannot dig, sayes he; he never would put it to triall, but takes another course without trying of that; so that alls one, can or cannot, if a man will not do that which he can, can or cannot, alls one to him.

5. Consider, *If a man will not do that which he can, this will make a mans conscience when he comes to speak in sober sadnesse, thank himself for his perishing;* mens consciences do but jest with them now, while they can say, tush tis because I cannot believe, and because I cannot repent; but at the houre of conviction, or the day of judgement at farthest, then conscience will speake in sober sadnesse, when I was hungry, ye gave mee no meat, sayes Christ, when I was athirst ye gave mee no drinke, I was a stranger and ye took me not in, sick and in prison and ye visited mee not, Matth. 25. 43. Mark, Christ puts no canner on their consciences at the day of judgment; could they say, alas, we had never a bit of bread for to do it, never a drop of drink for to do it? no, you shall see how their consciences were mute; they could not say that they could nor; could not ye comfort Christs deare members as well as mock them? couldst thou not take them into thy house as well as carnall acquaintance? its worthy observation to consider, that generally Gods threatnings do not run against Cannots, nor his judgements against Cannots, but against mens particular sins, that they might have avoided; for though mens sinfull consciences do necessarily incline men to sin, yet not unto this sin, nor that sin, non determinat necessariò ad hoc vel illud malum, hic & nunc, say our Britain Divines at the Synod. Sinfull concupiscence does not necessarily determine men upon these and these sins, with the particular circumstances which they live in, as this rapine, this lye, &c. Thus ye see this will make a sure ground of our Doctrine, if so be we can prove it.

Every man can do more good then he does, and avoid more evil then he does.

This is a most certain and infallible truth, and needs no confirmation, but I will prove it notwithstanding.

First, because God doth complain against the Wicked for the voluntary doing no more good then they do, what so much preaching and no more good? so many meanes and no more fruit? &c. so God complaines against Israel, nevertheless they departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, &c. and there remained the groves also in Samariah, 2 K. 13. 6. the grove also, what not so much as the grove cut down? and ye must have the sins of Jeroboam, that were enough stubbornness one would think; but must ye suffer the grove also? reform nothing, no, not the grove under your face? see how God girdeth their wilfull security that they would do no more good then they did? nor so much as cut down that grove? so many warnings and threatnings, &c. and yet the grove also? yet thy filthy Tongue, thy covertousnesse also, &c. not only keep thy other lusts, but thy prophanesse also.

Secondly, because otherwise there were no room for praise nor dispraise, if a man could do no more good then he does, nor shun no more evil then he does, then no man could be praised nor dispraised; you know that wicked men and women may do many commendable things, at least more commendable ones then others; does not our Saviour discommend Bethsaida, and Corazin, in comparison of Tyre and Sidon? woe unto thee Corazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty workes which have been done in thee, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, Math. 11. 21. might not they have shewed so much repentance at the least? could not they have put on sackcloth on their loynes, and poured ashes on their heads if they would? they might have done so much at the least, and honoured the workes and Preaching of our Saviour with an outward honour at the least. You that have such abundant teaching as ye have, ye might honour the Gospell with some outward honour at the least, that would be more commendable, which most of you will not.

5 Conf.

1 Argu.

2 Argu.

Tameis impossible erat Iudaei conversi per externum predicationem Evangelii absque praedicatione vinctis gratia quia tamen obdurati oves erant fidei propria malitia quam Tyrii & Sidonii, idcirco à servatore cordium corripitur Doct. Frid. le Gt. de med. scient. p. 65.

3. *Argu.* Thirdly, because otherwise there would be no roome for the sword of the Magistrate; if a man could omit no more sinne then he does, then what meanes our Pillories and Gallowses, &c. and other punishments upon Malefactors? will any man be so vain as to say Achan could not choose but take the Babylonish garment? certainly he might have let it alone if he would: why hast thou troubled us, sayes Josuah. Josh. 7.25. Alas, he was not able to answer, oh Sir I could doe no otherwise: No, no, he might have omitted it, and therefore the Law of man is favourable to such as offend against their wills; it does not hang such as kill against their wills.

4. *Argu.* Fourthly, because though a carnall man cannot put off the old man, nor shake off the dominion of sinne in generall, nor deny himself, but his very nature is sinfull and fleshly, he does naturally sinne, yet it is not his nature to commit this sinne at this time, and in this manner; the wickedest man under Heaven goes about his sinne with preiudiciall deliberation, and a most free disposition of the meanes; the drunkard goes freely into the Ale-house, and calls freely for a juggle or two or three, as his lust is; his Host he freely suffers these disorders in his house, and freely goes to the Tap and does draw it, &c. Ephraim did willingly walke after the Commandements, Hof. 5.11. The wicked King of Israel commanded them that will worship at Bethel, and they did freely and willingly obey it. Pilate willingly contented the people, and therefore he scourged our Saviour, Mark. 15.15. For though all this was done by the determinate counsell of God, yet Gods counsell put no simple necessity upon his will; he did freely and willingly doe it; the wicked they turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, Jude 4. Mark, the Grace of God; whereby they might doe more good then they doe, and avoid more evill then they doe. Its true, a wicked man is the servant of sinne, and cannot but sinne, he is naturally a servant of sinne; of sinne I say, but he is voluntarily and freely a servant of this sinne, for the Lord gives him reason, and counsell, and good motions, and many common graces, whereby he may be freed from this or that act, but he will not, he will break out into these and these filthy passionate words now and then; say reason what it will, and common grace what it will, he will doe it, he will doe this, and he will doe that. I confesse, that when a wicked man is desperate, and given up of God, then it is otherwise, then his will is so greedy, that he cannot take it off; but he is the more inexcusable, because his will is then double.

5. *Argu.* Fifthly, A wicked man can do more good, &c. for a godly regenerate soul may avoid more sin then he does. Though God have freed him from the slavery of sin, and he is become the servant of rightconnesse, Rom. 6. 18. neverthelesse they may do more good then they do, and avoid sin a great deal more then they do; what man will say that David could not otherwise choose but commit that adultery which he did, and that murder which he did, I appeal to your consciences ye soules that are godly. When ye pray, forgive us our Trespases, do not ye acknowledge with all that ye have been wanting to the grace of God? Do not ye confesse it with shame that you have given way to sundry temptations that by the grace of God ye might have overcome? and that ye have omitted many a good opportunity, that by the grace of God ye might have made use of it? I deny not but God does irresistibly convert his Elect at the first, and infallibly carry them on to the end for the main, but in particular actions he does not so; but though their wills be now free by grace, yet they may freely sin, even when they obey; and freely obey, even when they transgresse; and so they are forced to confesse they might avoid more evill then they doe, and doe more good then they doe.

Again, A wicked man may doe more good then he does, and avoid more evil then he does; I prove it by induction upon his conscience

By these Particulars.

First, for the outward acts of sin in the members; thus all profane persons, drunkards,

*Insuperabiliter
mover, quamvis
sit aliqua resi-
stentia.*

drunkards, &c. ye are all convinced undeniably in your consciences, these are sins in the very outward members; *voluntas* it is *domina membrorum*; can ye say ye cannot passe by an Ale-house when ye turn in? ye cannot come unto Sermons? your own legs they shall judge you; can you say you cannot give over your oathing and lying? &c. your own Teeth and Lips shall judge you, &c. If you doe not root out these sins, its without doubt because ye will not. The Lord hath made all the outward man at the command of the Will; and therefore if the outward man be out of order, 'tis because ye will: *μὴδεὶς ἐν λήγετω ὅτι ἐν τάλαντον ἔχω, ἰδὲν δύναμαι ποιῆσαι*, sayes *Chrysost.* Let no man say I have but one Talent, and I have no power to be good; a Talent hath power to goe for a Talent, and twelve pence for a shilling, and if it doe not, 'tis because ye will not. Hast thou not power over thine own outward members, vouchsafed thee of God? the Lord in mercy lets thy will have a despotical power over thy members as the Morallists call it, and why canst thou not bridle them? as *Christ* said to the Officer that smote him, *If I have spoken well, why smitest thou me?* John 18.23. Couldst thou not have held in thy fingers? thou art inexcusable then for all thy profane sins.

Secondly, *Thou hast naturall affections in thee*, and by them thou mayst do more good then thou dost, and shun more evil then thou dost. Thus all civill Professors, are left inexcusable: Canst thou not get more strictnesse of walking though not for love unto God; yet for love unto thy self? be more frequent in good duties for hope of Heaven, and for fear of Hell; thats better then nothing; better do them so then not at all. What cannot a man do for self-love and for fear? there is never a duty of Religion, but a man may every day do for love unto himself and for fear. God hath left these affections in thy soul on purpose. I know this is not enough; but what of that? Why dost thou not go so far as thou mayest? what aileth thee that thou canst not tame down thy pride for feare of Gods judgements, and bridle thy base passions for fear of Hell? It is not unknown that God hath vowed to destroy all the workers of iniquity: Tis not unknown that he hath prepared Hell for such as thou art, as long as thou livest as thou dost: Thou knowest this is true, and thou knowest God will be as good as his word, and thou art not able to abide it. Why dost thou not curbe thy proud stubborn lusts for fear of this Hell? Thats better then nothing; if thou canst not do it for love, yet why canst thou not do it for feare? hast thou not as much reason as a brute creature, that is greedy of meat, yet a whip-stick is able to scare him from it? an horse is desirous to stand still, yet a spur and a rod is able to make it go faster; and is not Hell more fearfull then all rods? Why dost thou not take heed for fear, lest God should send thee to Hell? a sinner and a hypocrite are inexcusable herein, for Hell may fear them; the sinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulness hath surpris'd the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? *Esay 33.14.* who of use is able to dwell with everlasting flames? and hypocrites may go so far; fear Hell, and abstain from a million of sins, for fear of these everlasting burnings: canst thou say thou canst not resist sin for fear of Gods judgements? No, thou canst resist sin for fear of lesse evils then so; the fear of mens seeing thee can keep thee from committing adultery in the marketplace, and cannot the fear of God restrain thee from it in private? thou darest not transgress the Kings Lawes for fear of the Gallowes; and cannot the fear of Hell restrain thee from transgressing of Gods? Gods displeasure is greater then the Kings, and thou knowest it: God is truer in his Law then any mortall man, and thou knowest it: and fearest thou not me? fear ye not me, saith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my presence, *Jer. 5.22.* Canst thou say thou art not able to fear him so much as servilely? that is not so; for when thou art sick, and ready to dye, then thou wilt fear him, then oh thou wouldst faine become a new creature, and all out of fear of the great God; and canst thou

1. *Argu.*
Amor sui ipsius
est obiectum mo-
rum; at Amor
Dei ipsius est
sanctum obiectum
terminativum.
Amel cas conf.
De charit. erga
Deum.

Quis poterit as
Mortem. habet it.

thou not now? No, no, now here be pleasures to be had, and thou wilt *have them*; here is the World, and thou wilt carke; here is businesse, and thou wilt be doing, and thou wilt not find leasure for God. No, thou wilt not; canst thou not doe this that *God bids thee at least out of feare*? this is nothing but a *lye of Satan*, thou wouldest doe them all for feare of a man. Suppose there were Lawes made that every man who does not pray in his Family Morning and Evening, should assuredly be hanged: whosoever sweares an Oath, should be hanged as soon as he hath sworn it: Whosoever breaks out into any bitter rayling speech, should suffer death. Suppose I say to all the duties of Religion it were death to omit them, & the King had made such a certaine sure Law, I dare say there would be many millions of Professors, more in England then there are; rather then ye would be gibbeted, many swearers would never sweare more; many lyars never lye more; many profane householders never omit Prayers in their Families more; and couldest thou doe this for feare of a man? why canst thou not then doe it for feare of the great God?

Thirdly, *The Lord hath given thee naturall counsell, and naturall reason and prudence*: Oh sayest thou, I am tempted before I am aware, and the passion is up before I am aware, I cannot help it for my life. No, I believe thee when the Devill is once up, there is no allaying that foul Fiend for the present; Thou canst not immediately allay it. But why canst thou not prevent it with *counsell and deliberation*? the very *Heathens have done this*, and thou hast advantage of all Heathen. God hath given thee not onely reason in thy head, and a naturall conscience in thy breast, but also *direction in his Word* to prevent it, and if thou dost not, thou wilt not: are the lusts of thine appetite violent? why then dost thou not fore-cast for to reine them? why dost thou not abstaine from going to Feasts a while? why dost thou not stint thy Trencher with so much? If thy lusts be on fire, why dost thou feed them with suell? Are the lusts of anger and wrath predominate in thee? thou rapst out an Oath before thou art aware; why then dost thou not as *Chrysostome would have thee*, Set forfeitures for every Oath? Why dost thou not intreat Gods people severely to reprove thee, and exact a fine of thee for every *misgoverning word*? Why dost thou not bawke such acquaintance as may occasion thy Tongue to cast out Oaths? Why dost thou not club down thy lusts with argument upon argument? shall I be touchy to be damned, and proud to be damned? &c. *even arguments of self-love* are able to knock them down. I doe not know how; No? that's because thou wilt not know; *They know not, neither will they understand*, Psal. 82.5. So thou knowest not, neither wilt thou understand; that's the reason thou still *walkest in darknesse*; why dost thou not oppose thy lusts at first rising? *non obtinebis ut desinas, si incipere permiseris*, sayes Seneca; thou canst never get victory except thou be here first in the Field. The Lord hath given thee counsels on this fashion; why dost thou not use them? onely because thou wilt not; hast thou impediments? *Clarence* had them too, but he overcame them sayes *Seneca*. Why dost not thou? If thou wilt not, thou dost willingly perish; thou mightst doe more then thou dost, but thou wilt not; and thou mightst shun more then thou dost, but thou wilt not.

Fourthly, because thou wilt say all these things are but *naturall*, and *morall*, and *civill*, I may perish for all these; but alas I am not able to doe any thing spiritually: I cannot believe, I cannot repent; though this be very true, yet thy plea is no excuse; for though they be naturall, yet they are first. First that's in order which is naturall, and afterwards that which is spiritual, and if thou stickest there, thou stickest at a will not. The Lord hath taken a sufficient course to humble thee, and thou wilt not be humbled; thou sayest thou canst not obey spiritually, I grant it, its most true: nor repent spiritually: why then wilt thou not be humbled that canst thou not? As God said to *Pharaoh*, *How long wilt thou refuse to humble thy self before me*? Exod. 10. 3. There is externall humi-

humiliation, as *Abahs* humiliation, thou mayest come to, before that humiliation thou canst not expresse: why art thou not humbled with that which thou mayst?

First then, why dost thou not see thy case to be damnable? Dost thou not know that judgement is past upon all to damnation? *Rom. 5.18. All men are damned out of Christ.* Whosoever is not a new creature, is not in Christ, but is a damned man to this day: thou knowest the Lord himself doth say thus: what hinders thee now from deducting a particular therefrom? If upon all men, then upon me; if all be damned to this day that are not new creatures in Christ, then I am a damned man to this houre: This *Logick* God doth vouchsafe thee; why dost thou not reason on this fashion? I am a damned man and a damned woman to this day: if thou wouldest be brought to this passe, there might be some hope of thee, but thou wilt not; thou wilt serape up some hopes or other, thou wilt not believe this; Believe thus, *says God*, but I will not, sayest thou: no, thou wilt have thy lust still, and thou wilt not believe this; if thou wouldest believe verily thou art a damned man, because thou art not a new creature in Christ, may be thou wouldest never have done till thou art one, thou wouldest forsake all, and follow Christ in all things, but thou wilt not.

Secondly, but I cannot, sayest thou: why then wilt thou not despaire in thy selfe? a man must despaire as he is, otherwise he can never get into Christ: as long as a man lives and does after the flesh, he can have no true hope of mercy, or pardon, or any thing, no, he is a dead man, all the Angels of Heaven cannot help him; if there were a thousand Christs, he should perish without them; and why wilt thou not despaire in thy selfe? Despaire? God forbid, I'll never despaire while I live, God is more mercifull then so, and I hope I need not despaire, Christ died for sinners, and I were a foole if I should despaire. Thus thou pleadest with God for thy vain hopes; but why wilt thou? *says God*, why wilt thou plead with me? thou hast transgressed against me, *Jer. 2.29.* Thou pleadest for hopes, and liest in thy sinnes, why wilt thou? Mark, the will is set on it, thou wilt plead: thou mightest despaire of thy selfe, but thou wilt not, and therefore thou wilt wilfully perish.

Thirdly, but I cannot pull down mine own heart, nor master mine own will sayest thou; No? Why then canst thou not goe and resigne it to God? Lord, here is a proud heart, I cannot humble it; Oh, here is a stony heart, I cannot break it: Lord doe thou; here is a rebellious heart, I cannot subdue it: Lord doe thou; but thou wilt not resigne up thy heart, thou wilt not set about it as well as thou canst; they will not frame their doings to turne unto God, *Hos. 5.4.* they will not; so thou wilt not frame thy selfe to doe it as well as thou canst. And therefore thou dost willingly goe on, and thou art wholly inexcusable before God; and when he sends thee to Hell, thou shalt know thine own will brought thee thither. Thou mightest reforme thine outward man, but thou wilt not; thou mightest bridle thy Lusts and thy Passions, but thou wilt not; thou mightest take a thousand good opportunities, but thou wilt not. And therefore thou hast no excuse before God, thou dost willingly perish. Its true thou canst not, may be, but necessity is not it, but thou wilt not: indeed if thou didst every day labour to fight against thy lusts, and resist to the utmost, and couldst not, then it were necessity, but thou dost not, nay thou wilt not. He that resisteth and then cannot, he may plead, Lord, what a wofull necessity of sinning am I in! but thou givest way to thy lusts, and therefore thou art inexcusable, and thou dost willingly perish.

*Repugnanti non
volenti necessi-
tas est. Sen.*

The Second Ground.

THe second now followes. Every wicked man is slothfull and negligent: Thou evill servant and slothfull, sayes Christ, Matth. 25. 26. Thou hast been lazie with the Talent I gave thee. I gave thee preaching and teaching, and thou hast been lazie to heare it. I have given thee knowledge of that which is good, and thou hast been lazie to improve it. I have pulled thee to Prayer by the motion of my Spirit, and thou hast been lazie at the duty: Thou evill and slothfull servant, I have given thee many a sweet opportunity to be rid of that base lust that thou art most addicted unto, and thou hast been lazie to take it. This is another ground of this Doctrine. Now if this be so, thou must lay the blame on thine own will, and not on Gods denying the power; because sloth is a fault of the will. I cannot call him a sluggard that sticks at a cannot, but onely him that sticks at a will not. He that labours and strives as much as he can, none will call him a sluggard, but him that can labour more, and will not. Sloth is a voluntary fault of the will: How long wilt thou sleep O sluggard? Prov. 6. 9. How long wilt thou? Its not a fault of impotency, but of wilt.

Five Demonstrations to prove this.

1 Demon.

Prov. 15. 29.

First, if thou be slothfull to good duties, then thou dost onely imagine a company of cannots. I cannot doe as I would sayest thou: No, why then are thou slothfull, to make more imaginary cannots? A slothfull man imagines more cannots then there be. I cannot goe this journey sayes he, I shall be weary, I shall be rob'd, I shall fall off my horse; I cannot travell it: the way of a slothfull man is a hedge of thorne: but the way of the righteous is made plain, sayes Solomon. The slothfull man he imagines there's a thorn-hedge in his way; I shall be prick't, I cannot get over it; What? is there a thorn-hedge in the way? No; for the righteous that goes it, he finds it plain, he sees none, no; there is no such thorn-hedge in the way, but he does imagine one; and therefore his will not is his let, not his cannot; for he does but imagine a cannot. So dost thou say, I cannot doe thus and thus; why then art thou slothfull to imagine more cannots, and thorne-hedges then there are? I cannot live then. Oh I cannot goe so often to Prayer, and if I should doe so as you say, I should be houred at up and down; you tell me I am a Hell-hound for my pride and my passions; Oh if I should believe this, I should never have merry day more. Alas all these are but imaginary cannots, imaginary Thorne-hedges. I cannot be so strict, neither can I put it up. I say thou dost but imagine a company of cannots; and therefore thou wilt not.

2 Demon.

Prov. 10. 5.

2. Demonstration. If thou be slothfull to good duties, then thou makest every little difficulty a cannot; nothing but an impossibility is a cannot, but if thou be slothfull, thou makest every little difficulty a cannot. I cannot turn mine own heart, nor break mine own heart: but why then art thou slothfull, to make every little difficulty a cannot? a slothfull man makes every little difficulty a cannot. The slothfull man will not plow by reason of cold, and therefore shall he beg in harvest and have nothing. He will not plow by reason of cold, he sticks at a very little difficulty; his fingers are so tender, forsooth, they must not ake, his toes are so Lady-like they must not smart, because its a little difficult, therefore he will not doe it; He will not plow by reason of cold; Well, beg then and ye will: cannot you endure a little cold? yea, he could endure it, but it would be difficult; and therefore sayes the Text, He will not plow by reason of cold. He does not stick at an impossibility, for then indeed he could not. But the slothfull man will not plow by reason of cold; he sticks onely at a difficulty, and therefore he will not; nay if he should labour soundly indeed, his very labour would keep him from being acold; the truth is, its the labour of plowing that he is against; and therefore every little cold shall serve for an excuse:

excuse. So why art thou slothfull to count every petty difficulty a cannot? it is an uncomfortable thing to be alwayes poring on my sinnes, I cannot abide it, its troublesome to be Tongue-tied. What not speake a word but onely with warrant from Scripture? I cannot abide it, what never helpe my selfe at a dead lift by telling a lye? never righte my selfe by a little revenge? never comply nor sort with such and such old acquaintance, because they drop out an Oath now and then before they are aware? O I cannot abide it. What thus precise? I am not able to abide it. No, cannot? cannot thy *stubborne will* stoop to a little difficulty? get thee to Hell, and see if thou canst abide that, and there thanke thine own will for thy perishing.

3. Demonstration, if thou be slothfull, then thou turnest thy very abilities into cannots; not onely all difficulties, but also thine abilities into cannots. Like a drone that is lazy, he loses his abilities that he hath. By much slothfulness the building decayeth. Alas I am very dead-hearted, sayest thou, nay, but O man the time was when God quickned thee at a Sermon, why didst thou let it decay? the time was when thou wert a little well affected, why didst thou let it decay? time was when thou wert sober, and lesse given to wrath and passions, and why didst thou let these good conditions decay? the Lord gave thee them heretofore, and thou hast played the sluggard with them, and therefore now they are decayed. Thy quickening is decayed, thy sorrow for sinne decayed, thy meltings decayed, through much slothfulness the building does decay. *He that is slothfull in his worke, is brother to a great waster.* So thou art brother to a great waster, because thou art slothfull.

4. Demonstration. If thou be slothfull, then thou dost voluntarily make thy selfe unto cannots. There is many a sinner that now thou art a slave to, that thou mightest have trodden under thy foot, but now thou canst not: thou mightest have gone further and further on in reformation, if thou hadst held on when thou wert going, like a Coach, its easier to make it runne on when once its going, then stirre it when once it stands still, and now thou canst not now thou art *nailed to it, like the doore to his hinges*. Now thou canst pray and pray and grow ne're the better; hear and read and ne're the holier: *As the doore turneth upon its hinges, so doth the slothfull man on his Bed*. The doore goes to and fro, to it goes, and fro it goes, it goes may be all the yeare long, and still it hangs just upon the same hinges, and after seven yeares travell it hangs there where it did, its nailed to its hinges. So its with a sluggish heart; he goes to a Prayer, and from a Prayer, to a Sermon and from a Sermon, to a good duty and from a good duty; and still he hangs just on the same hinges, he hath gotten no ground, is just where he was; so thou art just at the same paffe, after a thousand prayers and a thousand Sermons, and millions of good duties, still thou hankest on thy old duties, ne're the more pure to this house.

5. Demonstration, *Sloth is a lazy putting forth by halves of that power one hath*. This also is the very nature of Sloth, when a man hath more power then he shewes, but he is lazy to put it all forth. The Scripture uses a comparison of a man that hides his hand in his bosome, and though he have meat standing before him, yet he will not so much as bring it to his mouth. A slothfull man hideth his hand in his bosome, and will not bring it to his mouth. What? why does he starve? because he hath not any meat? No, the meat standeth before him; because he hath not any hands? No, he hath a hand in his bosome; because his hand hath the dead Palfie, & he not able to stir it? No, he will not put it forth. *He will not bring it to his mouth*, sayes the Text; So when thou art Praying, thou wilt not put thy self forth; when thou art reforming, thou dost

3 Demon.

Ecclesi. 10. 18.

4 Demon.

Prov. 19. 14.

5 Demon.

Prov. 19. 24.

not put thy selfe forth; when thou art about any good service, thou dost not put thy selfe forth; here is a Sabbath before thee, and a Sacrament before thee, but thou wilt not reach it to thy mouth; thou wilt not put thy selfe forth. *The Lord tells thee this sinne will breake thy necke, and thou wilt not so much as reach it to thy mouth, nor apply it to thy heart; may be it would humble thee, and feed thee, but thou wilt not reach it to thy mouth; what a deale of power hast thou? but thou puttest it forth by the halves, when thou art examining thy conscience, thou puttest thy selfe forth by the halves, thou mightest put thy selfe forth many degrees more, but thou wilt not.*

Oh beloved, this same point will strike the world dumb before God, even this, why did ye not put your selves forth to the utmost? Thou hast somewhat more in thee then by reason of thy lazinesse thou dost put forth.

Six arguments
to prove it.

There is more then by reason of Sluggishnesse thou puttest forth.

1. Arg.

First, its a signe it is in thee, because when God does convert a sinner, he does not put in new powers and faculties into the soul: he does not put in a new faculty of thinking and understanding, and willing, and affecting, and remembering; No, the soule hath these faculties already, understanding already, and thinking already, and remembering and desiring already, and willing already; but God does not put in new faculties, but turnes them that are there unto himselfe: like a Watch out of frame, the wheelcs are there still, the spring still, and every parcell there still, but all out of frame, and the artist sets them in frame; so the Soule hath them in it; True, it requires the omnipotent power of God to turne all these faculties to him. Notwithstanding thou dost voluntarily turne them unto other things, and not unto God. They are every one in thee, as thou art a man. But God may not have them, nay and thou mightest put them forth to more then thou dost. Other things can have them superfluously, but God may not have them. (I intend not a power of doing the least good in a gracious manner, nor to engage God to give thee grace only.)

When God comes to work grace, he finds in thee indeed *Passive capacities*, or *poornesse* obedientia, but their owne naturall faculties are raised to supernaturall acts upon the supernaturall object, God.

2. Arg.

Secondly, its a signe it is in thee. (I meane still so farre forth as to demonstrate thee slothfull.) I say its a signe it is in thee, because thou canst shew as great power otherwise: When a servant can runne a race for his sport, why will he not on his Masters errand when he bids him? Its a signe it is in him, and he will not put it forth. Canst thou not spare an hour every day for private Prayers unto God, sometime for to meditate and belabour thy heart? Thou canst spare twice as much for thy belly and thy back, and thy profits. Canst thou not shed tears for thy sins? Thou canst shed tears for madnesse, and wrath, and vexation. Canst thou not tell how to glorifie God? Oh my parts are very shallow, gifts very small, &c. but thou art wise to do evil! They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. Its a signe it is in thee, but thou wilt not. Thou canst not speake for God, thou canst not be angry against sionne, nor lay to heart the miseries of Gods Church: No? but thou canst find thy Tongue fast enough for to raile, and clamour; and thou canst even burst with anger when thou art crost. Its a signe its in thee, a signe there is wit enough in thee, and ability enough in thee to take paines. Thou hast it for other things; but thou wilt not put it forth for the Lord. Oh how does this provoke the most High! That strangers should devour all thy strength; like Ephraim, strangers devoured

Jer. 4. 21.

Hof. 7. 9.

devoured all his strength. God might have none of it, but strangers and strange lusts could have it: The World can have thy paines and thy cares, the things of the World they can have thy thoughts and thy strength, and not I, says CHRIST. As a Master complaines of his refractory Servant, you can doe it for your selfe, and doe it for others, but you will not doe it for me; a signe it is in thee; but thou wilt not put it forth.

Thirdly, a signe it is in thee, for thou canst shew it to whom thou list, like a 3 Argu.
 sluggard that will worke at idle times; so thou canst serve God when thou hast nothing else to doe; like *Pharaohs conceit of the Israelites*, That they would serve God because they had nothing else to do. Ye are idle, idle ye are, therefore ye say, *Let us go and do sacrifice unto God*. Because they had nothing else to do: So when thou hast nothing else to do with thy Tongue, then thou canst give it to God; nothing else to do with thy thoughts, then thou canst think of God, when thou hast no use of a lye, then thou canst tell truth, &c. a signe it is in thee; it is not the telling of the truth; it is not the speaking very gently and modestly, that is not in thee to doe, but thou wilt not put it forth; nay thou canst be soundly provoked while some are in company, and yet still as quiet as may be, a signe it is in thee.

Fourthly, a signe it is in thee, but thou art so sluggish thou wilt not put it forth, because the rod is able to whip it out of thee; Like a Boy that is idle and can say nothing, yet his Master is able to whip it out of him, then he can say it very roundly. So thou canst not think of these things, yet let God lash thee, and whip thee with sickness, or with the pangs of death, Then O I have beene a Drunkard, and I have beene naught, I have beene wicked, and Oh if God would recover me, I would not for a world sinne so as I have done: Then thou canst weepe, and then thou canst cry, and then O for the Minister! A signe it is in thee, for a rod puts in no new, but onely lashes up that which lay there; as the *Twigg*es of the rod have no vertue in them to put learning into the Boy, but its a signe it was in him. Ah thou wretch thou, thy blood lies on thine owne head; why then dost thou not now put thy selfe forth? Thou canst, but Oh it kills thee to thinke now of taking paines after such things; It kills thee now to goe to thy beads and lie at weeping crosse, and be so holy forsooth; Oh it kills thee now to take paines hereabouts, like the sluggard, *the desire of the sluggard kills him*, for his hands refuse to labour. He desires to have a crop but it kills him to go to the Plough; he desires to have his markets, but it kills him to go thither. So thou desirest to go to Heaven, but it kills thee to take paines; Mortification, Selfe-Deniall, Repentance, Humiliation, Examination of Conscience, Reformation of life; Oh these kill thee to thinke of them. A signe much is in thee; but it kills thee to put it forth.

Fifthly, A signe it is in thee, because thou canst do a hundred times more when thou art pleased; like a wilfull lazy servant, you could do it better if you were pleased, sayes his Master. So as long as thou art pleased thou canst be more religious, a signe it is in thee. *Rehoboam*, his first yeares were religious; *Peter Martyr* observes; he was well pleased that same while he saw it was for the establishing of his kingdome. And the *Levites* came to him, from *Ieroboam*, so long he was pleased, and then he was religious, but afterwards not; and why not afterwards too? Its a signe it was in him, but he was not well pleased; So *Ioab* did right in the sight of the Lord all the dayes of *Jehoiada*. Why? then he was well pleased with Religion, for it helpt him to root out *Ashatiah*s faction; *Jehoiada* had beene the saviour of his life, the helper of him to the Kingdome, the Lord protector of his Nonage, 2 Kings 12. 2.

the establiſher of his Scepter. All this while Religion did pleaſe him, but afterwards he would not do right in the ſight of the Lord. Why? becauſe other things now pleaſed him better; but its a ſigne it was in him. They on the rock, they could heare, and profeſſe as long as the Goſpell did pleaſe them, they heard it with joy, that pleaſed them well. Ye know joy is a very pleaſing thing, and then they could be forward to profeſſe it. A ſigne it was in them, but in time of affliction and perſecution, nay now the Goſpell did not pleaſe them, and therefore they fall off. So thou canſt love a child of God as long as he pleaſeth thee, nay thou canſt commend him for his holineſſe; O its a credit to thee to be acquainted with ſuch a one; but when ſome thing does not pleaſe thee, then thou canſt hate him in thy heart; all theſe are ſignes it is in thee, but thou wilt not put it forth.

6 Argu.

Luke 16, 28.

Sixthly, a ſigne it is in thee, becauſe thou wilt ſhew it in Hell; there Dives ſhall ſhew it was in him to have regarded a godly poore Lazarus, to have reſpected the ſalvation of his five brethren; there he ſhall ſhew it was in him to feare Hell more then he did. Then the wicked ſhall ſay: What hath pride profited us? And what have riches and meanes advantaged us? Then they ſhall ſee it was in them not to count them for hypocrites, and Fooles, and mad Men, that were more religious then themſelves. *We fooles counted their life madneſſe, and we had them in deriſion, and lo they are received amongſt the Saints, Wiſd. 5. 3. 4. 5.* And therefore it is in thee, why then wilt thou not put thy ſelfe forth? I ſay this will ſtrike you all dumb before God at the laſt day; why would you not put your ſelves forth? and how do you ſtand lazing and idleing out the dayes of your own peace?

Ye cannot have any one excuſe.

No excuſe will ſerve impenitent ſinners turne at the laſt day.

First, Ye cannot ſay *no body hired you*: Indeed the carefullſt ſervant in the World muſt of neceſſity be idle when none will employ him; why ſtand you here idle all the day long? No man hath hired us Lord, *Matth. 20. 6.* Marke, they have an excuſe that they were never hired into the Vineyard. That was more neceſſary idleneſſe; but you have beene hired, nay you were hired very early in the morning, and therefore why ſtand you here idle all the day long?

Prov. 18. 23.

Secondly, Now thou art in Gods Vineyard, thou canſt not ſay *I cannot profeſſe*, I cannot profit by hearing, nor profit by praying, &c. Thou canſt not ſay ſo; for why doſt thou not labour? in all labour there is profit. Never did a man labour but ſome profit or other he did get; but thou wouldeſt not labour, but thou ſtoodeſt lazing and idleing. Faine wouldeſt thou be ſaved; faine eſcape Hell and damnation, and oh that this were to labour for it! Like the ſluggard that deſireth a Harveſt, and yet is idle; *O utinam hoc eſſet laborare*: He lies loytering and playing, and oh that this were to labour! Oh that this were to plough and to ſow! If his Bed were the Plough, and his Pillow the Teeme, he would then drive it well: So doſt thou, *utinam hoc eſſet reſpiſcere*, thou goeſt on minding the things of this life, carking and caring, &c. *Vtinam hoc eſſet reſpiſcere*. O that this were to repent, and this were to go to Heaven: thou art negligent of prayer, and, Faith, and Holineſſe, *Chriſt Jeſus ſave me*, Thus cries the Drunkard, *Chriſt ſave me*, and thus the Worldling, *Chriſt Jeſus forgive me*. Thus like a ſluggard thou wiſheſt, O that this were believing and ſerving of God! Like the ſluggard I ſay, O that this were to labour! thou mighteſt profit if thou wouldeſt labour; *in all labour is profit*; but thou wilt not labour, and therefore inexcusable. O what a ſpeechleſſe creature ſhalt thou be before God at the laſt day! This is the ſecond ground of the Doctrine; The reaſon why a wicked man does not turne unto God, is not becauſe he cannot, but becauſe he will not. I ſay the ground of it is this.

Every wicked man is ſlothfull and negligent.

Stirre up your selves ye whose heart the Lord hath awakened ; Though the wicked be slothfull, will ye be slothfull also ? O what infinite reason hath the Lord to correct us, every one of us all ? *How wofully slothfull are our hearts !* I cannot master my unruly heart, sayes one, and I cannot cast out this same hard-hearted *Devill* : Thus we say like the *Disciples of Christ*, we could not cast him out. O faithlesse Generation, how long shall I be with you, sayes *Christ*. *Mat. 9. 19.* Cannot cast him out ? Why ? he could goe out by *Preaching and Fasting* ; So these same distempers of heart, these frozen-hearted *Devills* would goe out soon enough by *Fasting and Praying* ; But oh we are so lazy thereat, and so cold, and so dead, and so drowsie, we doe not take paines. There is *teaching in abundance* ; and why cannot ye learne ; There is *miserie enough on the Church*, and why cannot we *mourn* ? There is woe enough a comming, and why cannot we provide for't afore-hand ? *God will whip out these lazy weeds out of us, if we belong to him ;* O it provokes him ! as *Vineger to the Teeth*, and *smoke to the Eyes*, so is the *slugard to him that sends him*. *Prov. 10. 19.* Ah thou lazy drone ; this 'tis to send a leaden-heeld drone of ones errand ; it makes the *Master* look as *sowerly* on him, as if he had drunken a *Porring of Vinegar*. So beloved, this our sloth to good things it doth deeply provoke God ; there is many a *mercy* we lose, because of our sloth ; many a *grace* we never attain, nay many a *cross* and many a trouble doe we get by reason of our sloth. Oh let us stir up our selves, and blow up the *sparkes* that are under the *embers*, or else it will be evill and bitter, that God will make us to suffer. And you that live in your sinnes, let me tell you, ye can never look for *mercy* except ye shake off your sloth ; ye may desire to be converted, and pardoned, and saved, and so forth ; but the *soul of the slugard desireth and hath not* ; but the diligent shall be made fat. 'Tis the diligent, the diligent onely that shall be fatted with grace ; but ye may desire all dayes of your lifes, but ye shall never have grace, except ye take paines, Nay, your own raines shall torment you in *Hell* ; Oh how did I idle out my time, and let slip occasions ; and I would die, and I would to hell, and I would not doe otherwise, and woe is me that ever I was born, &c.

The third Ground.

A wicked man will not set himselfe to use all the meanes that he may.

HE is not only slothful in the use of the same, not only he wil not do as much good as he may, but also he will not so much as use the meanes constantly in any fashion. I cannot, saith he, repent, nor be such a new creature as you talke of ; Why then wilt thou not use the meanes ? This makes thee inexcusable. All the whole World both godly and ungodly have a cannot ; indeed the ungodly their cannot is larger and begins sooner, but the godly their cannot is much lessened, and begins further off. The Lord inables them to goe farther then all the wicked of the World ; but beyond that, there begins their cannot. I say all the whole World have their cannot ; I call that the meanes of grace, which is between their can and their cannot. As *Prayers* and hearing the Word, and studying, and meditating, &c. The Lord seeing all men in their cannots, hath appointed such meanes as they can, whereby they are to seeke unto God to do that which they cannot. Now a child of God whose cannot is in some measure healed by grace, he can pray in faith, and heare in faith, &c. And therefore Prayer in faith, hearing Gods Word in faith, &c. are his meanes to get more : he cannot obey more, nor believe more, but he uses these meanes that he may. But a wicked man, his cannot is larger, he cannot pray in faith, and do these in faith, and therefore the faithfull doing of these duties are not his meanes. I cannot do so, sayes he ; no, but thou mayst

Col. 4.6.

mayst set upon them all, and doe them in as good manner as thou canst; that is thy meanes. Though thou canst not pray in faith, yet thou canst set up constant prayers in thy family though, such as they are: Thou canst not conferre with grace, but thou canst conferre about grace every day: thou canst not repeat the Word to thy household in faith, but thou canst repeat it in as good a manner as thou art able; that is thy meanes. Now, if thou wilt not use the meanes, thou stickest at a *will not*, and when thou dost perish, thou must thank thine own will, thou stickest at a *will not*. The first question Christ asks thee is this, what canst thou doe? As when the sonnes of *Zebedee* beg'd to sit one on the right hand, and the other on the left, this they could not, except God did vouchsafe them a new gift. But what can ye doe? sayes Christ, *are ye able to drink of the Cup that I am to drink of, and be baptized with the Baptisme that I am baptized with?* We are able, say they, *Matth. 20.22,23. Ye shall drink, &c.* Mark, he puts them to doe that which they can, and then bids them leave that which they cannot unto God. I say, the first question Christ asks thee is, what canst thou doe? I cannot be a Saint, Lord help mee to mercy, &c. Yes, but what canst thou doe? Canst thou not use these and these meanes I appoint thee? If thou wilt not doe them, neither will I help thee. This is the nature of meanes, to be a meanes to that which one cannot. A child of God can pray in faith, but he cannot master such a lust, and therefore he prayeth in faith that he may. He can heare the Word preached in faith, but he cannot get his heart to it as he would, and therefore he heareth in faith that he may. Doing these in faith are the meanes; now this is not the meanes of the wicked, for they cannot doe any thing in faith; but their meanes is to set about them at least, that they may. I cannot pray in faith, sayest thou, yes, but thou canst set up constant Prayers in thy Family though, such as they are: thou canst not cast off thy sinnes in faith, thou mayst cast them off though; a godly man may doe these things in faith, and therefore that is his meanes. But that which is his can is thy cannot; and that which is his meanes, thou must use meanes unto. Thou must pray that thou mayst pray in faith, repeat the Word, that thou mayst repeat it in faith: reforme thy life, that thou mayst reform it in faith; and seek the Lord, that thou mayst seek him in faith. Now, if thou wilt not set upon the meanes thou stickest at a *will not*, I confesse here is the difference, *the godly have a promise upon their using of their meanes, they using them in faith, but thou hast no promise; yet who knowes what God may doe?* As the King of *Nineveh* said, Let's cry mightily to God, let's cast away these and these sinnes, *who knowes if God will turn and repent?* *Jon. 3.9.* he had no promise, he could not tell whether God would forgive: He would set upon the meanes, he would cry mightily, and it hit well, for God spared the City: if thou wilt not set upon the meanes, thou dost willingly perish; and here I cleared two things, 1. That God appoints every man the meanes that he may use, he may use those meanes that God commands him as meanes, 2. That if he will not, he does wilfully perish.

Note

This confounds the
Heresy of the
Arminians;

Arguments to prove a wicked man may use the meanes that God appointeth as meanes.

I cannot heare the preaching of the Word, sayest thou, I am deaf, I cannot heare Sermons, then that is not thy meanes: reading, which thou canst; and meditating, which thou canst, is thy meanes. Every man may use the meanes that God does appoint him as meanes.

1 Argu.

Med's.

First, because its the very nature of meanes to come between ones *can* and his *cannot*, and therefore they are called *media*, because they come in the midst between a mans *can* and his *cannot*. By what meanes may I goe up to *London*? flying in the Aire is not any meanes. No, that is a *Birds* meanes and not *mine*, for I cannot doe it; but my meanes is going, if I have legs; or riding if they be not able; or carrying if I cannot ride. Every mans *medians* come in between

tween that which he *can* and that which he *cannot*, and he is to use them, that that which he cannot he may be enabled to doe.

Secondly, because God does not *salveth men* like a company of stocks and stones, but as *men* that are *edifiable* by his words. If there were no means they could possibly use, they were like stocks and stones. If they had no eares as means to let it in, no understanding as means to conceive it, no power of willing at least to set about it, then we should preach to a company of stocks: There must be some means propounded, that men are enabled to use (though by any power of their own they cannot doe it graciously) or else as good preach to a company of stocks. Now God protests he draws men as men may be drawn: *I draw them with cords of a man*, *Hos. 11. 4.* That is, with such cords as a man may be drawn with, not like a company of stocks and of stones; if ye have but the carnal reason of a man, these cords they would draw you. God draws you like men, with cords of a man: indeed in the quickning of the heart, and in point of repentance, a man is no more active then a stone. But when he draws you to the means, he draws you like men, and therefore ye may come if ye will, and if ye be but men, these cords are cords to draw men.

Thirdly, because Gods anger is very reasonable; when a Master is angry with a servant that may doe a thing and yet will not, we call his anger a very reasonable anger. I know Gods anger is very reasonable, for things which thou canst not; because once he gave thee power; but when he commendeth the means, now this anger is very reasonable. We our own selves count his anger very reasonable in the like case; what will he not do it? No not use the means for to do it? Would not this anger any body? Say we so, for these things sake comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. *Eph. 5. 6.* That is for Adultery, for Fornication, for vain words, and vain hopes to be saved; for these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. He does not say for not being renewed, for not being converted, but for these things comes the wrath of God forth. He's angry for that, but his wrath comes generally forth upon men for these things because they will not use the means; They will not give over those sinnes which are the hinderances to conversion. This is very reasonable; if a man were not able to do it, there would be some shew at least of unreasonableness in Gods anger; but there is not any shew of unreasonableness in his anger, when men will not buckle to the means which they may. When God commanded the *Egyptians* to submit and be humbled, they would not; he commanded them at least to use the means to let his people goe, and they would not. You shall see how the Text sayes his anger now was very reasonable: there is a sweet phrase, *Psal. 78. 50.* *He made a way to his anger*: in the Hebrew is he weighed a path to his anger. He weighed it in a *ballance*: Mark how reasonably and proportionably God is angry. He puts his anger and mens sins in a ballance, and weighs out the right measure of anger. When a servant forceth a master to be angry whether he will or no, he cannot complaine his Masters anger is unreasonable; he may go of his errands, and he will not; he may do this businessse, and he will not; if he cannot do the businessse it selfe, yet he may use the meaner, and will not. Now his Masters anger is very reasonable, because he forceth him to be angry: as the *churning of milk bringeth forth butter*, so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth *brife*. *Prov. 30. 33.* He does even churn his Masters passions, and he forceth the same, as a churner forcing the milk to become butter, so he forces ones kindnesse to become anger; and therefore the anger is very reasonable. So God is very reasonable in his anger: wilt thou not use the means to be quickned? Suppose thou canst not quicken thy selfe, but wilt thou not see about the meaner? This churneth the Lords anger, and his anger is very reasonable.

Fourthly, Gods offer of his Kingdome to the wicked is serious: if they were

were senselesse and quite dead, and could doe nothing, his offer were not serious: should a man offer an hundred pounds to a dead carcase, here is an hundred pounds for you, if you'll take it, He give it you: this offer were not serious, because the dead carcase is not able to stir, but is senselesse. True, in matter of Conversion it selfe a man is as dead as a carcase; neverthelesse he is not absolutely a dead carcase to all use of the means; he hath the life of nature, and of reason, and of sense, and therefore when God offers his Kingdome in the means, this offer is serious. *Turne you at my reproofe, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you. Prov. 1.23.* He speaks there even of Reprobates and all; and he seriously offers them his Spirit, and therefore they might have gone about the means, but they would not; *Vocatio Delictaria*, as our Divines doe all say, and therefore the means he appointeth may be used.

5. Argu.

Fifthly, because Gods reproofs are very equall. Should a man reprove a Cripple for not running, this reproofe were not equall, because he is not able to doe it. I grant when God reproves the wicked for being sinfull, such reproofs are all equall, though they be not able to be without sin: but then equality is grounded upon something before, namely upon their voluntary Apostasie and inabilityty in Adam. But when God reproves them for not setting about the means, his reproofs then are very equall, and the equality is grounded upon their wilfulnesse present; *Will ye not feare me?* sayes God: I doe this and this. Mark, his reproof is very equall. God reproves Israel for not observing his Statutes, saying, *the statutes of Omri are kept. Mal. 6. 16.* You can observe his statutes, why cannot you set about mine? he sets up a Temple, you can goe constantly to it, why cannot you goe constantly to mine? The reproof was very equall. If thou wilt not set upon the means, thou art most equally condemned. I cannot Preach so often as some doe, nor be so much resident as some are. No? Why wilt thou not give over one of thy two Livings then? Thou art able to doe that. *If thou wilt not set upon the means, thy condemnation is equall.* Thus I have confirmed this first Point, namely, that the wicked may use those means, that the Lord commands them as means.

In the second place I shewed, that this being thus, thy condemnation must be wilfull, if thou wilt not use all the means.

1. Argu.

First, *The Lord will not help that man by a miracle to goe, that hath legs to goe and will not.* Thou sayst thou wouldst faine goe to Heaven; Tell me, what legs hath God given thee? what means hath he lent thee? If thou wilt not use them, the Lord will never help thee without. Had the Israelites had any means to have gotten over Jordan, as Ships, or Barks, Boats, or Bridges, or Fords, and they would not, he would never have helpt them over without. You know the Lord parted the waters, *Josh. 3. 13.* but if they had refused the means, he would not have kept them on this manner without: if they had food sufficient in the wilderness to eat, and they would not, he would not have rained food down upon them; had they had Shoemakers, and Drapers, and Cloth sufficient to come by, and they would not, he would never miraculously have kept their garments from wearing. Its a tempting of God, when thou hast the means, and wilt not be diligent in them, to desire God to help thee without, thou wouldst have thy children Gods children, thy family Christs family; then use the means; Set up the constant Invocation of Gods Name Morning and Evening among them; set up Reading, set up Catechising, and every good thing, or thou canst never expect it. Wouldst thou be holy and heavenly? then use the means; Talk of Heaven in thy meetings, reason about grace, inquire of good souls, and how may I come by an humble heart? How may I get faith, and be led by the Spirit? If thou wilt not be constant in the use of the means, all thy prayers to God are nothing but ramblings. Thou art troubled with by-thoughts; thou sayst thou wouldst faine be delivered therefrom, then use the means

means, be not so long without God every houre, pray every day, strive in the duty the harder; if thou wilt not use the means, God will never help thee without. Thou art full of thy doubtings, thou sayest thou heartily desirest to be freed; then use them eans, or thou lyest: give over thy broad walking, thy broad acquaintance; those that have no more holiness in them then the stock, are thy bosomest friends; if thou wilt not use the means, God will never assure thee without, nor convert thee without; if *Dives* his five brethren will not heare *Moses* and the Prophets, they shall have no miracle from the dead, *Luk. 16. 18.* if God lend thee the means, he will not save thee without.

Secondly, God will not bate a farthing of the price he sets thee at; when a Tradesman hath once set his lowest price, he will not goe lower. Now the use of the means are Gods lowest price, the Lord will not bate a farthing of that; wherefore is a price put into the hand of a foole? *Prov. 17. 16.* the means of grace are this price, and the price is in thy hands; when the Lord vouchsafes thee the means, he'll not bate thee a farthing of this price. He sets this price on his mercies and graces, thou must use all the means; not as though grace might be valued, no, it exceedeth all prices: or as though grace were not free; yea, its free and without price: its fit though that this price should be set upon the almes, that the proud beggar should choose to receive it; if thou wilt not give the price that God hath put into thy hand, thou art worthy to misse it; I will give so much, and labour so much, and pray so much, and reforme so much. No, no; that will not do, Christ will have tother odde penny too, thy filthy speaking must off, and thy base passions and old courtes must off, he'll have thee stoop to all his holy means, wouldst thou have it cheaper? Mine own children and Saints never had it cheaper. Not *Abraham*, *Isaac*, not *Jacob*, nor *Paul*; they were faine to use all holy means, to abandon every lust, to set up every duty, invocation in their families, meditation in their hearts, examination in their consciences, holy communication in their mouthes; none of my Saints had it cheaper: & thou makest a mock of them for praying so much, and professing so much, so much hearing, and so much gadding after Sermons, &c. Well, well, I'll not bate thee one duty, nor one lust, nor one carnall desire, I'll have thee set about all, or thou shalt never have mercy. Yea but I cannot find in my heart to put up this, nor to be abridged of this, and shall Christ and thou part for one single farthing? Perish then, and go and thank thine own will for it in Hell, God is resolved upon this price, & this is the lowest.

Thirdly, God will never be brought out of his walke, thou canst never look that God should come out of his walke to shew thee any mercy, or give thee any grace. Now the way wherein God walkes, is the means of grace and of salvation; There thou must look for God, or thou canst have no hope for to find him. Suppose a poore petitioner should come with his petition to the King, he can never look to have the King come downe hither to *Rochford* to grant it him; No, he must go up to the King. The King is at Court at *White-Hall*, and there he may have him; if he will not go thither, he is wilfull, and if his petition be not granted, he may thank his own will: So thou canst not looke to fetch God out of his own walke, the means of grace and salvation, endeavour to obey him, prayings, cryings, seekings, &c. These and other means of salvation are his walke, these are the wayes wherein they must wait to find God, if they would have him, in the way of thy judgements have we waited for thee. *Isa. 26. 8.* There the Godly wait for the Lord in the way where his walke is; he will not be spoken with, but only there in his walke. If thou wilt not seeke him there, thou must thank thine own will, if thou missest him; ye that are negligent to hold out in Gods wayes, ye can never look to find mercy while ye live. Pray for mercy, and cry for mercy, and grone for mercy, ye must looke to perish without it: if ye will not seeke it in his wayes; you'll seeke him in some, but you will not seke him in all, assure your selves then you shall misse of him; do you thinke

the King will come to you, to grant your petitions ? you must goe up to him, and take him where he is to be spoken with. *God will not be spoken with but only in his wayes; the Jewes received Sacraments enough, every meales meat is a new Sacrament in the Wildernesse, afterwards they prayed prayers enough, but I will not heare you sayes God; nere tell mee of your seeking for mercy, wash you, make you cleane, put away from you the evill of your doing. Learne to do well; come now and lets reason together, if your sins be as red as Scarlet, I'll whiten them.* Now he'll be spoken with if you will come hither; What not erect his feare up in thy family ? not give over thy base carnall comforts ? keep such disorders under thy rooffe, and in thy life ? sweare still ? and give place to the *Devill still* ? cursed passions still ? mock at my children still ? Dost thou walke in these wayes and hope to find good ? No; as good cut off a doggs neck, as give him sacrifice of prayers as long as you walke in your own wayes. *Esa. 66. 3.* you must seeke him in the wayes that he walkes in, and not choose your own wayes, heele never come out of his way for any of you all; what shall I doe Lord ? sayes *Saul*, he would faine have spoken with God there. No, no, goe to *Ananias*, &c. if thou wilt not seeke him in his way, thou art well served if thou missest him.

I beseech you consider this point, you can never looke to be saved, except youle set your selves to do what you may, and use all those means that you may; for though the use of the means does not save you, yet they are the way, though not *causa regnandi*, yet *via regni*; and if you will not constantly use them, you can never have his Kingdome.

Reasons of it.

First, because Heaven is an end, and an end can never be gotten without means; the end is eternall life. *Rom. 6. 22. eternall life* is an end, and therefore except the means be all used, you can never attaine it.

Secondly, God hath annexed it to the means; all Heaven and Earth can never separate them; either use all the means that God hath appointed, or else he hath decreed it, ye shall never be saved. When he hath once appointed these and these shall be your means, these shall you use for't, ye shall never be saved without them. When God hath appointed their abiding in the ship a means of their escape, you shall see what *Paul* sayes, except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved, *Act. 27.* So tis for Heaven, except ye abide in the means, ye cannot be saved.

Thirdly, Every soul must give an account before God, how he hath used the means, whether he hath used them all yea or no. And according as the account is he can give, so shall his judgement be. God hath sworne this, as I live saith the Lord; God hath pawned his owne life upon this, that thus it shall be. As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confesse to God; every one of us all shall give an account unto God, *Rom. 14. 11, 12.* every one of us, God will exempt none, we must all be brought to an account for these things: will not thy heart bow to it ? As I live saith the Lord, I'll make every knee bow to it, I'll make you bow or I'll break you for ever: as good do it as not, for ye shall give an account whether ye have done it or no.

Fourthly, beloved, God will not set up another door into Heaven for any man in the world; either come in at this, or you shall never come in. He'll never make another Bible; either be ruled by this or by none: He'll never chalk out another way, either go this way or choose, and perish in thy wilfulness. The drunkards way shall never be his way; the worldings way shall never be his, nor the lazy Gospellers his, nor the carelesse professors his, hee'll never change wayes, nor are my wayes your wayes. *Esa. 55. 8.* you must amend your wayes, *Jer. 7. 3.* and come unto his way, or ye shall never escape the evil to come: can there be any reasonabler way then this?

Prooves.

Prooſes.

First, Some of the meanes that God hath appointed you may do them without labour, you may do them with ease: do but say, I will, and it is done: What labour is it to say, company-keepers shall not sit drinking in my house? There is never an Ale-house in your Town, but if they will, they may root out disorders from their houses: their own wills do destroy them. Its no labour in the world to do this, and will ye not do it? perish then, and thank your own wills.

Secondly, some of the means that God hath appointed, are easier then them, onely that you would give way to another, to do them: may be the wife would have prayers in the family, if the husband would give way. The Minister would teach you, if you would give way: The Lord Jesus might work many things in you, if you would give way: this is lesse then to will. You that have good Wives, who would reform sundry things, if you would give way, &c. I beseech you, apply it particularly to your selves, your ruin is wilfull, if ye yeild not, and will not give way.

Thirdly, Some of the means are yet easier; for some of the meanes of grace are better for you, even in your carnall and worldly respects. Youl say that's the easiest of all for a man to favour himself and his flesh: As for example, the reforming of your gaming, dicing, carding in your Innes, your drunkenness and bezzeling o're the pot: your pride and your gawgaws, and the like: would not this favour your purses, and be more agreeable to your very carnall respects? and therefore you that do not reform these, you pluck wilfull perdition on your heads.

Fourthly, some of the means of grace, its harder to omit them then to use them: Many of you meet with more hardships in the omission, then you could light upon in the practice of them: I need not instance the particulars, they are very familiar.

Fifthly, some of the meanes of grace, be they hard, yet they are not hard, they are not impossible for you to use. They will ask no more then a little labour and diligence, and therefore omitted onely by reason of wilfulness.

I hope by this time you see clearly the truth of this ground. If ye will not set your selves to use the means of grace and salvation, when ye die you must needs lay the blame on your wills: And why will ye so? *Why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

But notwithstanding the evidence of this truth, *The wisdom of the flesh which is enmity against God*, fills carnall minds with many objections against it: from all which I shall endeavour to vindicate it, by answering them all in order.

The first objection is drawn from those Scriptures which say they cannot.

From their own willingness, they would, but they cannot.

Is from their own desires, they desire to do it, but they are not able.

Is from their resolutions, they purpose, but whether they will or no, they are faine to break their good purposes.

Is from their good endeavours (as they say :) they labour against their sins, and yet they are transported into them, so near before they are aware, so be overtaken in company, &c. We will answer them in order.

As to the first Objection from the Scriptures, which say they cannot, I answer.

Indeed the Scripture speaks of five cannots.

First, of a naturall cannot: every man is born by nature under a cannot believe, and a cannot see God: But there is difference between thy cannot repent, and thy doest not repent: there is difference betwixt these two.

Fff 2

The

1 Object.

2 Object.

3 Object.

4 Object.

5 Object.

1 Object:

answered.

2 here are five

cannots in

Scripture:

1 Cannot.

The cause of *thy cannot* is one thing, and the cause of *thy dost not* is another. The cause of *thy cannot* is the carnalnesse of nature, but the cause of *thy dost not*, is the wilfulnesse of thy will. *The naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishnesse to him*; neither indeed can he, for they are *spiritually discerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. Where the Apostle makes a different cause of a naturall mans cannot, and his *does not*: when he speakes of his cannot, he tells us the cause of that is because grace is spirituall, and he is carnall. Neither indeed can he, because they are spiritually discerned: but when he speakes of his *does not*, you see he alledges a different cause of his *does not*. The naturall man *does not* receive the things of the spirit of God, they are foolishnesse unto him; he counts them all foolish: He is so wilfull in his own carnall reason, that he counts it folly to deny it: Thou canst not do thus and thus dost thou say? Why then wilt thou count it folly to do so? when a man crosses thee of thy will, thou countest it folly to put it up; I were a foole if I should be so precise as some be: I were a foole if I should not suffer a little disorder in my house, as long as I gaine by it: This is mere wilfulnesse; this, and not a cannot, is a cause of thy *dost not*. Thou canst not indeed because thou art carnall, but thy cannot is dead and not operative: thy will is the cause of thy *does not*; Like the wilful blind man, He was blind and would not open his eye-lids. He could not see, but his cannot lay dead, for he would not open his eye-lids: his cannot is not operative till he will open his eye-lids. If he could see, yet he could not till he would open his eye-lids, so thou wilt not open thine eye-lids.

Secondly, the Scripture speakes of a *deliberate cannot*, when a man cannot do a thing, *onely because he cannot find in his heart to do it*. Thou canst not repent of this and that sinne and forsake it, the truth is, thy cannot is this, thou canst not find in thy heart to forgoe it. Such a course is profitable and pleasing to thy flesh, thou canst not find in thy heart to abandon it, thou canst not find in thy heart to be friends with such a one; to part with thy vanities, or to abridge thy selfe of thine angry speeches when thou art stird, &c. Thou canst not find in thy heart to do it. As the Jewes, you cannot believe, sayes Christ, because ye seeke honour one of another. Job. 5. 44. they would faine be well thought of of all their acquaintance, and therefore they could not find in their heart to believe in Christ. Oh that would make thee to be out of favour with the Pharisees, and to be counted basely of in the World? Therefore they could not find in their heart to believe; now this is no excuse; thou canst not turne unto God, thou canst not find in thy heart to part with thy lusts, this is thy cannot.

3 Cannot.

Thirdly, the Scripture speakes of a *judiciall cannot*, as a rogue cannot goe, because for his loytering the Magistrate hath lockt him in the stocks; This does not excuse thee one jot; shall the villaine be wilfull in his loytering, and then complaine of the Magistrate that he is not able to go about his worke? I cannot goe about my worke sayes he; and who bad him be so idle as not to goe about it, when he might? Thou hast gone on may be wilfully in thy sinnes, and now the Lord hath inflicted a judiciall cannot upon thee. Thou canst not come out of thy sinnes, nay the Lord hath cast this cannot upon thee in judgement; he hath set thee in the stocks for thy wilfull security. As the wicked Jewes, they could not believe, sayes the Text, because *Isaiah saith, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts*, Job. 12. 39, 40. could they excuse themselves for their cannot? No, the Lord had set them in the stocks for their wilfulnesse and security. They could not believe, for they had wilfully provoked the Lord to cast this cannot upon them in judgement.

4 Cannot.

Fourthly, the Scripture speakes of a *compounded cannot*; A cannot in sense composto, as we call it, a cannot in a compounded sense. As a Drunkard cannot tender his family, his poore wife and children. No, as long as he lies bowling

sitting on the Ale-beach he cannot, in a compounded sense he cannot. *Aristotle* *Impossibile est sedentem ambulare.* sets it out by sitting; he that is sitting cannot walk, that is, as long as he is sitting he cannot walk. As Christ saith of a carnall man, *he cannot be my disciple*: he cannot in a compounded sense: *He that commeth to me, and hates not father and mother, and wife, and children, yea and his own life, cannot be my Disciple*; *Luk. 14. 26.* he cannot indeed, so long as he stands upon these terms, My father will not love me, and my mother will not like me; if I should be one of your Disciples, my friends would not own me; I must doe as I doe, or I cannot keep my wife and children. Indeed as long as thou standst on these terms, thou canst not be a Disciple of Christ, thou canst not in a compounded sense, but if thou wouldst; divide it, thou mightst: *no man can serve two masters, Mat. 6. 4.* mark, compound them together and he cannot; but if he would give over one, he might serve the other: thou canst not thou sayest; No, I yeeld thee in a compounded sense thou canst not; thou canst not as long as thou art thou carelesse as thou art, as long as thou favourst thy self in such and such lusts; thou canst not. The compounding of thy security and lazinesse with Religion, that is the reason why thou canst not; this is it that makes our prayers hard, and our repentings hard, our believings and all our performances hard, because we would faine be compounding. We have much adoe to Pray, our hearts can hardly be brought to wrestle, much adoe to be humbled, our wils will hardly stoop; if it were not for these compoundings, these duties were easie. And what excuse hast thou hence? none at all: for its a cannot onely in the compounded sense that thou makest it.

Fifthly, the Scripture speaks of a humbling cannot, a cannot not to bolster thee up in thy excuses, but onely to humble thee, that thou mayst be driven out of thy selfe unto God. A servant cannot live, except it be his Masters pleasure to take pittie on him; Is this any pretence to him to anger his Master? or to be negligent of his Masters commands? nay rather it forceth him to be so much the more carefull to obey him, and to be humble before him. So the Scripture sayes, that thou canst not without God, except God shew mercy on thee to convert thee and save thee, thou canst not be accepted of him. *All this is to humble thee, not to help thee with excuses.* Tush I cannot doe as his Ministers doe bid me, I cannot mortifie these sins, I cannot be so strict, this is too much precisenesse you speak of. *O murmure not, this cannot is only to humble thee: murmure not among your selves; No man cometh to me, except the Father draw him, Joh. 6. 43, 44.* This is no reason why thou shouldst murmure or cavill, or be stubborn as thou art, thou canst not come at Christ, except the Father take pittie on thee to draw thee. Thou hast so much the more reason to be humbled, and not to goe on wittingly and wilfully as thou dost. Canst thou not be holy and saved, except he be pleased to pittie thee? in what a wofull case then art thou, to provoke him as thou dost? So much shall suffice for thy first Objection drawn out of the Scripture.

The second thing thou objectest, is thy willingnesse; thou wouldst as thou pretendst, but thou canst not.

I answer thee for this.

First, may be its the will of thy conscience, and not the will of thy heart; *2 Object.* thy heart is carnall and unacquainted with God, and so its contented to be, answered. onely thy conscience would have thee grow better and more heavenly, but thy heart will not yeeld; and therefore all thy willings are nothing but deludings, they are onely the willings of conscience, and not of thy heart. Thou art chafing and fretting every foot, thy conscience tells thee thou shouldst not; thou art praying carnally every day, when thou hast done, conscience sayes thou shouldst pray holier then so; *conscience would, but thou wilt not,* conscience would have thee get assurance for Heaven, but thou wilt not be at the pains. Alas, this makes thee inexcusable, for now thou condemnest thy selfe, and yet

wilt sin; *Thou art inexcusable O man whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy selfe.* Rom. 2. 1. Mark when a man condemneth himself, he is inexcusable. (I doe not now quote it for the particular the Apostle does instance there for judging another) for the truth is, is the same, whatsoever sinne we doe instance in, the truth is this that Paul grounds his speech on: *He that condemneth himself in a sin, and yet will goe on in it, that man is inexcusable.* What now hast thou gotten by thy plea? thou wouldst, thou sayst; this makes thy sinne to be worle, in that thy conscience would, and yet for all that thou wilt not.

Note.

Secondly, may be its a copulative will; thou hast a will to repent and be godly, but it is with a copulative will. Repentance and some lust, Godlinesse and some lust; thou wouldst faine please the Lord and thine own lust too; be religious and proud too; believe in Christ and covet too, and be vain too, &c. Thou hast a will but it is a copulative will, to serve God and do this too; Pish, cannot I serve God, and doe this too? No, no, this same copulative will is a flat contradiction. Couple light and darknesse? *Christ and Belial?* 2 Cor 6. 15. Its a contradiction to imagine to couple them, for they cannot possibly be coupled. And therefore this same copulative will is nothing but a mockery, and the truth still is this thou wilt not.

Thirdly, May be thou hast a woulding will; this is no will, but onely a velleity; so thou hast a woulding will. I would do as well as any other, but I cannot; to speake properly this is no will, for its onely that will wherewith fooles will things impossible; I would I were at London with a with, sayes he, I would I could flye as well as an Eagle. These things are impossible, and therefore its no will, but meere folly; thus may be thou wiltst grace, I would with all my heart I could do as God sayes, God knowes my heart, my will is good, I would be better then I am; And yet thy conscience can call for some thing or other to be mended, and thou wilt not. This is an impossibility, and therefore no will; like the foole that would sit in his chaire, I, and would I were at London, he would faine be at London, and sit still. So thou sittest at the same pisse, I would I were in Christ; thou wouldst faine be in Christ, and yet thou art loth to stirre out of that base temper thou art in. This is an impossibility, a folly and no will; woulding and no willing. I grant the Saints of God have their wouldings, and their would does go further then their will; their will is absolutely set to be holy, and they would be more holy; their will is deeply to be humbled, and they would be deeper; their would is grounded on a will, they will in some measure and they would goe further. I will, oh that I could will more! But thou that liest in thy sinfull estate, *thy would is pure folly.* A would grounded upon a will not, is foppish; the Saints would is grounded upon a will; but thine, the root at bottom is this, thou wilt not.

Notes:

Fourthly, may be thou hast a generall metaphysicall will, but its come pariticulars, there thou wilt not. I hate the Saints of God? God forbid; I'll never hate them while I live; and yet come to this Saint and that Saint, *him thou wilt hate; him?* He is the veriest hypocrite in the Country, and keeps more adoe then needs. Thus thy will is good to a company of metaphysical Saints in the clouds; but those that are Gods Saints in particular, thou mockest. I be stubborn against the Commandements of God? I will not be stubborn against them; yea, but *this and that Commandement thou wilt not observe.* Thou wilt not thinke best of them of whom thou shouldst, nor take up that carriage in meetings that thou shouldst; thou hast a good will to the Commandements in affliction, but thy will stands against the particulars of them. Generals are but Notions, when they are abstracted from the particulars. And therefore thy will is but a Notion; the will when it willet indeed, willet particulars, this particular duty, this particular Ordinance. Indeed good, in the

When carnall men can discover no other blemish in the Saints, then they charge them with hypocrisy.

the generall is the object of the will, but when the will comes to will in the exercise of it, it pitcheth on particulars.

Fifthly, thou hast no true will, I speak still to the carnall, I say thou hast no true will, because if thou truly didst will, thou couldst; if thou didst truly will to believe, and will to be a new creature, thou couldst; for the will it hath *potentiam executivam*, so farre as it will, &c. It hath an executing power to goe so farre as it wills; if thou didst truly and really will to speak holy, thy will would make thy tongue to put it in execution. If thou hadst a will, thy will would command execution, *my tongue shall speak the praise of the Lord*, sayes David, *Psal. 119. 171. 172. my soul it shall praise thee*, verse 175. I grant the wounding of the will goes further then all execution can goe, *so will is present with me, but how to performe that which is good, I find not*, Rom. 7. 18. I quote this place the rather, because many wrest it to their own destruction. Oh sayes a wicked man, I have a good will, I would as Paul sayes, *but I cannot performe*, thus men misinterpret this place; for look how farre Paul would, he could performe, for the will hath *potentiam executricem*, and an imperative force over the man. What he did will, he did performe, he performed it in his heart, and tongue, and hand, &c. but he would draw his will forwarder then it was, but he could not; his very will was partly unwilling, he could not indeed performe so much as he would, that is, he could not draw on his will so strongly as he would. His will was not perfectly sanctified, no Saint in this World hath any perfect compleatnesse of will; and therefore his performance is not perfect, because his will is not perfect. I say if thy will be converted to God, thou thy self art converted to God, obedience ever goes as farre as the will. And therefore if thou art willing, its certain thou art obedient; if ye be willing and obedient, sayes the Text, *Isa. 1. 19. whosoever is willing to obey, that man does obey* in some measure, because the will hath power of execution, and the whole man at command. This is the reason why Divines say, that the *sincerity of the will is the condition of the Gospel*; wherefore if thou beest not obedient, neither art thou willing to obey; all the powers of thy soule, and all the members of thy body, thy will hath an *actus imperativus* to command them. Now if thy will will not command them to weild, thou art not so much as willing at all. If a Justice of peace should tell me he would give me a warrant, and yet when all comes to all he will not command his clerk to write it, nor his own hand for to pen it, I see plainly he will not. Dost thou say, I would obey Christ, and I would deny my self, why then dost thou not command thy Clerke to write it? If thy will will not command tongue, Tongue thou shalt never talk so unprofitably as thou hast done, and Eare thou shalt never hearken after vanity as thou hast done; and thoughts, Thoughts ye shall never run at rovers as ye have done. If your will were but willing it would command your whole soul, *Soul thou shalt not doe as thou hast done: as Davids will commanded his soul, O my soul blesse the Lord, and forget thou not all his benefites*, *Psal. 103. 2.* Nay, he commanded all that was in him, *all that is in me blesse his holy Name*, ver. 1. So if thou wert willing, thy will would command all thy soul; soul thou shalt not be so seldome at the throne of grace as thou art, &c. Thus much of the second objection drawn from the will.

Objection the third.

But thou desirest to doe it, and therefore thou dost not stick at a will not.

I answer thee, who can tell best what is in thee, God or thine own heart? verily the Lord that did make it is likeliest to know best. Now the Lord sayes preemtorily, thou desirest not grace; yea, and thy heart sayes so too, and the Lord heares it, though thou hearest it not; they said unto God, depart from us, *we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes*, *Job. 21. 14.* Nevertheless, because thou standest so stoutly upon it, that thou dost desire grace, I'll tell thee the reason of thy mistake.

3. Objection,
answered.

First;

1 Kings 5:31

Ecc 6:6.

First, thou hast putative or thinking desires, thou thinkest thou desirest, and therefore thou art mistaken; like *Seneca's* young scholar, that said, he desired to be good. I doe not say, saith he, he lies, but *putat se cupere*. He thinks that he desires; so thou sayest thou desirest; I will not say thou iyes, but thou thinkest thou dost so; now alas thy thoughts are the vaineest things in the World. *How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. 4:14. thy thoughts are very vaine, there is no trusting in them. *Naaman* thought, *I thought*, saith he, but how wide his thought was the story declares. *Haman* thought, *he thought in his heart*, sayes the Text; but these thoughts came to nothing but a Gallows and a Halter. *Ishbubenos* thought, but you know what his thoughts did come unto; it fell foule on his own head, nothing is more vaine then the thoughts of carnall mens hearts, so thou thinkest thou desirest, *alas thy thought is but vanity.*

Secondly, thou hast ignorant desires, thou dost desire to be one of Gods Saints, thou desirest it ignorantly; for when thou comest to see who the Saints be, namely, such and such whom thou conceivest to be strange people and Puritans, then thou hast no desire to be one. Thou desirest to goe after *Christ*, thou dost ignorantly desire it, for when thou seest thou must take up his crosse, then thou hast no desire thereunto; as the Prophet speaks of Christ in the person of the wicked, when we shall see him, *there is no beauty that we should desire him.* Esay. 53:2. thou desirest with ignorant desires before thou seest who he is; but when thou seest who he is, thou dost not desire him. Thou desirest his grace, thou desirest to believe and repent, and to put up injuries, these are ignorant desires before thou seest what they be; but when thou seest what they be, what the injury is that thou shouldst put up, then thou dost not desire to put it up; what the sinne is that thou shouldst leave, then thou dost not desire for to leave it; when thou seest them, then thou dost not desire them. When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

Thirdly, thou hast wandering desires. Oh saith one, you have a happy turne, you have good Preaching, and good meanes to be godly, and be edified. I desire to be so; but alas our Minister does not Preach, and we have a dumb dog; and I am in a very wicked place, If I were as you are, I should count my self happy. God knowes, I desire heartily the edification of my soul; thus thy desires wander after other mens cases; and thou wilt not stirre out for thine own. How dost thou desire to be edified, when thou wilt not stir out two or three miles to be edified? Thy desires are like wandering vagrants, that will be every where wandering, but only there where they should be. So thy desires goe roving up and down, you are happy; and he is happy and thou art unwilling in the meane time to labour, where and how God hath appointed thee. These are none but gadding, wandering desires; better is the sight of the eyes then the wandering of the desire. Eccl. 6:9. thy desires wander abroad to a roming company of wishes, but thou wilt not observe that which God gives thee to see; thus much of the third Objection drawn from desire.

The fourth Objection.

Thou resolvest and hast good purposes, but oh thou canst not performe them.

I answer thee, doe but consider what thy purpose is, and thou shalt see how thou art cozened; these purposes thou speakst of are only voluntaries de futuro. I will hereafter look to it better then I have done heretofore. Hereafter I will, I purpose, that is hereafter I will; alas, this will for hereafter is no will.

First, because its only to shuffle off the willing for the present. Now the heart is unwilling to obey, and therefore it puts off the commandment to hereafter, not for any such desire that it hath to doe it hereafter, but only because it is unwilling to doe it for the present. Like a man that is unwilling to lend, he lend you hereafter, sayes he. *Say not unto thy neighbour, goe and come again,*

again, & to morrow I will give thee, when thou hast it by thee, Pr. 3. 28. his purpose to lend him to morrow, was onely because he would shuffle off the lending to day. And therefore this purpose of willing hereafter, is no will at all, but onely to shuffle off the willing for the present. Thou hast the opportunity by thee, why dost thou not take it? thou hast the temptation by thee, why dost thou not resist it? dost thou say thou hast a will for hereafter? that is but a gull, that thou mayst not will for the present.

Secondly, this will for hereafter is no will, because it goes without Gods; no will can go without God. Gods will is now, he would have thee now, and thou wilt not, thou wilt hereafter, but then may be he will not. He that will not when he may, when he would he shall have nay; afterwards when thou wouldst faine be converted, and pardoned, &c. Lord open to me, nay but O men, when I would thou wouldst not, now thou wouldst, but I will not, thy will for hereafter goes without Gods, and therefore tis no will.

Thirdly, thy will for hereafter is no will, because thou shalt misse those suppositions that thou willest upon.

First, thou supposest thou shalt have fewer temptations hereafter, O when these troubles are over, and these temptations are over, I will, nay, but O man, when these are all over, new ones will come, and if the temptation for the present be a hindrance, some temptation or other as bad thou shalt meet with, that shall hinder thee hereafter much more, & therefore this supposition is false.

Secondly, thou supposest thou shalt be fitter hereafter; but, *Quot non est habile, erat minimus aptus eris*, if thou beest not fit now, much lesse wilt thou be afterwards; thou'lt be unfitter and unfitter, like meat, the longer it is kept, the unfitter tis to be eaten, and therefore this supposition is false too.

Fourthly, thy will for hereafter is no will, but a mockery. *Antigonus I dabo*, *Antigonus, I will give*, this is not good in mens Lawes, much lesse in Gods; *Dabo*, I will give; this is no gift, sayes the Law. *So respiciam*, I will repent; this is no repentance, sayes God. Thus you see this Objection is nothing, never tell me of thy purposes, thy purposes are willings for hereafter, and they are no wills at all.

The fifth Objection.

§ Objection answered.

Thou endeavourest and labourst to serve God, and to be saved.

I answer thee, Alas? *is this to labour for grace, and for Heaven, when thou labourst so idly?* as God said of that talking, so may I say of thy labour, *is this the fast that I have chosen? to afflict a mans selfe for a day?* So, is this the labour that I have chosen? To labour so as thou labourst? but I need not to insist on this plea, thy conscience is able to answer it. Thou labour? thy conscience knowes well enough thou art lazy, thou dost not labour for holinesse; so then thy impenitency is wilfull, and thy damnation wilfull, and thy ruine wilfull.

To conclude then, understand all you that will not hear and obey.

First that your destruction is from your selfe, you cannot cast it upon God; he offers you the means to escape it, and you will not, *Hos. 13. 9.*

Secondly, your destruction is most just; you cannot alledge severity and cruelty; no; y^e our selves are cruell ones. You judge your own selves unto Hell. The Lord presseth the Gospel of grace upon you, and you put it off. *Act. 23. 46.*

Thirdly, your destruction is inexcusable, you having nothing to excuse you: God hath taken away all clokes of excuses, he hath offered you saving knowledge, & you would not; a Christ, and ye would not; good motions, counsells, threatnings, and you would not. Your mouches are quite stopped when you perish, *Matth. 22. 12.*

Fourthly, your destruction is unavoidable; if you would have relented and yielded, there might have been hope, but you would not. You have hardened your necks, and what's that but a will not? Therefore you shall be destroyed without remedy, *Prov. 29. 1.*

Fifthly, your destruction is pittilesse; what eye can pittie you? *Will will have will, though will will have woe* as we say; not God, nor Angels, nor Saints, no eye can pittie you. If the thiefe will fleele, and will to the Gallows, let him go, he is no object of pittie: as we say of a wilfull man, no tale can tane him to take heed, so no means can tane you to take heed; and therefore when you rue it, you cannot be pittied.

Sixthly, your *destruction is grievous*; of all plagues, none will fret more then those which one hath wilfully pald on himsele. You'l one day gnash your own teeth, *curse your own wills*, banne your own hearts; woe is me, I am under the rod, and my selfe gathered it; in *Hell*, and my selfe kindled it. I might have prevented it, but I would not.

Now followes the Application.

Use 1:

Learne instruction then, lest ye perish wilfully; reforme as much as you may, downe with all your disorders, *stumbling-blocks of iniquitie*, and all the *Idols of your hearts*, and cast them into the brooke Kidron. Set up good courtes as much as you may, use all the means to salvation as humbly as you may; let not any family be without the due worship of God in it. Fathers, suffer not sinne in your children, nor Masters in your servants, lie not, sweare not, covet not, omit not the exercises of hope, lest ye justly, inexcusable, unavoydably, pittilesly perish, and so *reproach your owne wills for ever in Tophet*; as *David* then said unto *Solomon*, after he had set him businesse to do, *arise therefore and be doing, and the Lord be with thee*, sayes he, 1 *Chron.* 22. 16. So I may say to you, Arise and be doing; up, set about it, use no excuses, humble your selves before God, see your misery and bewaile it, and the Lord be with you.

But may be you will say, this Doctrine is *Pelagianisme*, or *Arminianisme* at least. Nay then, let me tell you, tis *Arminianisme* to hold the contrary. You make your wills to be your own, and free for to will, that say your will is to repent, but you cannot. And if God should give you a *posse*, ye professe your selves to be of the *Pelagian heresie*; if God should give you a power you would adde the will. To passe over this, and so to go on.

Except the belief of this truth do sink into thy heart, thou canst never soundly be humbled; if thou shouldst say, Lord, I would faine have repented all this while, but I could not, thou never soundly wert humbled: a man is never humbled as long as he excuses himsele: thou sayest I would be holier, I would pray better, and I would reform more, but I cannot; this is to fall to excuses, and not to be humbled: For,

First, thou excuseth thy self for all transgressions besides originall. A man must be humbled for his actuall sins as well as originall, and count himself inexcusable for one as well as tother. But thou pitchest all thy humiliation upon thy Apostacy in *Adam*, if now thou pleadest a cannot. Lord I confesse I was conceived in sin, but now I cannot do withall, I cannot do otherwise though I would never so faine. I cannot but drink now & then & be drunk, I cannot but rap out an Oath now and then in my haff, &c. I confesse I brought this cannot upon me in the loyns of *Adam*, but upon the supposall of that, doest thou bid me give over my sins? I cannot, this is not to be humbled but to fall to excuses. Its true, actuall corruption which naturally flows from originall, requires that one and self same humiliation that originall does. But otherwise thou must be humbled with a new humiliation for thine actuall transgressions, or else thou art not humbled but pleadest excuses. *David* humbles himsele for both, with one humiliation for the one, *Psal.* 51. 5. with another for the other, v. 3. But as long as thou pleadest on this fashion, thou excuseth thy self for thy actuall sins, and never art humbled.

2 Excuse.

Nay then, thou excuseth thy self for thy originall sin too. Lord, I would be without sin, but I cannot, if I could I would: belike then if it had been thy case as it

was

was *Adam*, thou wouldst not have eaten of the forbidden fruit. And therefore it was his fault and not thine; thou wouldst not have sinned if thou couldst have otherwise choosed. And therefore thou excuseth thy selfe for that too for thou sayest thou wouldst not have sinned if thou hadst been as he, he sinned when he might have otherwise choosed; but thou wouldst not have done so. Thus thou excuseth thy selfe for thine originall sinne too; And therefore thou canst not be humbled as long as thou pleadest thus; the truth is thou wilt willingly sin as well *Adam*. God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions. Eccles. 7. 29. he speaketh of *Adams* being upright; God made *Adam* upright; he does not say but man hath found out many inventions, as though it were his fault alone that was created upright. No, God made man upright, but they marke, he casts the blame upon every man as well as *Adam*; but they have sought out many inventions. Thus we must be humbled for our originall corruption: but thou canst not be humbled as long as thou pleadest on this manner; no; thou excuseth thy selfe; and therefore thou wilt never yet be humbled.

Note.

Nay thirdly, thou excuseth thy self for every sin, thou makest all thy sins to be nothing but infirmities, as though *Pauls* case were thine: the good which I would do, that do I not, and the evil which I would not do, that do I. I would be godlier then I am, but I cannot; and therefore thou makest all thy sins to be infirmities. What is a sin of infirmity but a sin the will protesteth against? thou sayest that thy will protesteth against every one of thy sins, thou wouldst leave them, but thou canst not. See then how farre thou art from sound humiliation: thy presumptuous sins are all nothing with thee, thy stubbornnesse nothing, and thy wilfulnesse nothing, no all thy sins are infirmities. Nay, thou makest thy sins to be purely and only infirmities, invincible infirmities; invincible infirmities are the most excusable of all. Now when thou sayest thou stickest at a Cannot, thou makest thy sins not only infirmities, but also invincible infirmities, such as thou canst not possibly avoid; thou wouldst faine avoid them but thou canst not; and therefore if thou goest this way to work, thou canst never be humbled.

3 Excuse.

Sin of infirmity.

Nay fourthly, Thou commendest thy selfe more then God: nay if ever God should enable thee and give thee power to be a new creature, thou makest thy selfe more beholding to thy selfe then to God. The will is more then the power: the will to believe, and repent, and convert, is more then the power: *Actus secundus est nobilior actu primo*. To be able to believe, and to be able to repent, and become a new Creature, these are but first acts. If God would help thee to these, thou sayest thou wouldst adde rather. Thou wouldst believe, and thou wouldst convert, and thou wouldst be a new creature: if God would give thee the power, thou wouldst adde the Act. And therefore thou commendest thy selfe more then God: for in morall powers which have a further reference unto Act, the act is more noble then the power. The truth is; the will is better then the power of doing; and both is of God, and so the Apostle does shew it. Its God that worketh in you, speaking of the Saints, *Its God that worketh in you both the will and the deed*, Phil. 1. 13. Mark, the will and the deed: First the will, and then power to bring it into deed; the will is the primary blessing of God. And this is the reason why a Child of Gods estate is now better under Christ, then it was before in minority; for then he had only power: if he would, and now both the will and the deed. I say this is the truth, the will is more then the power; and therefore thou wilt never be humbled in thy selfe, that pleadest, O I would, if I could; thou makest thy selfe more beholding to thy selfe then to God; if God should ever convert thee, and therefore thou art not yet capable of conversion; why? thou art not yet humbled, but standst as proud as ever with the Lord.

Note.

5 *Excuse.*

*And Cessen
drum, Domine,
does me quid no
voto.*

Nay sixthly, thou canst not so much as pray to God for a will, thou art so proud, that thou art conceited thou hast already. I have as good a will to be good as any body else, but I cannot possibly do as I would; so that all thy prayers to God are a mockery. The godly humble soul prays as the ancient Church used to pray; *Domine, dona mihi bonam voluntatem, quod bonum est mihi.* But thou canst not pray so, thou art bricker beggar then for, for thou hast a good will already thou thinkest. A man cannot pray for a thing the lack whereof he is not sensible thereof. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.* James 1. 5. He cannot pray for a thing if he do not think that he lacks it, nor thou for a will, for thou dost not think that thou lackest it. Nay if God should convert thee, thou canst not give him thanks for converting thee, for thy will needed none; my brethren wilt pray for possibilities till thou hast them, and give him thanks for possibilities when thou hast them, but thou canst not pray for a will, for thou thinkest thou hast it, nor give him thanks for thy will, for that is thine own. So that thou art devilishly proud, never humbled since thou wert borne. Nay thou art so proud, that all thy prayers are but mockeries, and thy giving of thanks is a mockery. How canst thou look that God should convert thee, when as thy proud heart tells God before hand, thou wouldst not thank him if he should?

6 *Excuse.*

*Carnal men
excuse them-
selves, and cast
the blame up-
on God.*

1 *Reason.*

Nay seventhly, Thou castest all the blame upon God; for its even just as if thou shouldst say, I cannot help it, if God be not pleased to enable me, how can I help it? My will is as good as anothers, such are so forward and so Heavenly, God gives them the power; but my will God knowes is as good as theirs, I would faine do as well as the best, but I cannot; O if God would enable me, I would. O Beloved, take heed of these conceits, for ye cast all the blame upon God; whereas the blame is in your selves, ye would not be enabled. I say ye cast all the blame upon God.

First, because ye cast the blame upon nature, its my nature, and I cannot; I would, but its my nature and I cannot. Thou layest the blame upon thy Nature, and therefore thou castest the blame upon God for not helping thee to a better nature: it is God that justly determines mens natures. Ones nature is more cholericke, anothers more fearfull, another more lazy, anothers more lustfull. Dost thou lay the blame upon nature, my nature is more subject to choler, and wrath? Alas, thou layest the blame upon God, for its he that disposeth of mens natures; and therefore, thou takest part with those wretches that said, *why hast thou made me thus?* Rom. 9. 20. thou layest the blame upon God, I would not do thus, but onely 'tis my nature, and I cannot helpe it. No. And wilt thou lay the blame upon God? No; no: this is thy nature and thou art contented with this nature.

2 *Reason.*

Secondly, Thou dost cast the blame upon temptations, it is my hard hap to fall upon temptations, I was tempted or I would not have done it: this is to cast the blame upon God too, for it is his providence to order temptations. Such and such temptations for one man, such and such for another, such now, and such then. Its the providence of God that disposeth which and which temptations every man shall have. One shall have temptations to Pride, another temptations to Wrath, another to Revenge, another to Covetousness; its thus, God tempteth on man, but he orders the temptations of men. *Let no man say, its the will of God for God tempteth no man.* No, every man is tempted as sin by his own lusts. Thus thou wouldst say if thou wert humbled, but thou layest the blame upon God: it was long of temptations that I did it. This is as if thou shouldst say, it was long of God that I did it, because 'twas Gods providence that ordered these temptations to be laid for thee.

Jam. 1. 13.

3 *Reason.*

Thirdly, because thou layest the blame upon the times, the times are very hard, I would not goe in this fashion, but onely that the times require it. I would be more vigorous sitting and repenting the Word, &c. I would willingly

ly be more forward then I am, but the times are very bad. This is to lay the blame upon God; for God leaveth interposition times. It had been in Christs time; or Pauls time; or Queens time; but I would have thought and thus; thou layest the blame upon God, I for God; I shall every man say. When God from eternity made the common place Root of all the whole World, he appointed such and such to live first; such men; and such men; such and such to live here, and such there; Such as this world, and such as that; so sayes the Apostle, he hath made of one blood all Nations of men; as thou seest all the face of the Earth; and hath determined the times before appointed; and the bounds of their habitation. Act. 17.26. Mark, he hath appointed the times; and the places, the times when they shall live; and the places where. God leaveth mens times; and therefore thou which layest the blame upon the times, layest the blame upon God.

Fourthly, because thou layest the blame upon this Commandement. If it were any Commandement but this, I would doe it; but this I cannot doe; if it were any other injury but this, any disgrace but this, I would willingly put it up, but I cannot put up this; if it were any duty but this, I would doe any thing but this; but to root out all disorders out of my house, alas I cannot doe this, I cannot live, as good keep me lone at all, as not suffer men to call for what they would; I cannot doe this; this is to cast the blame upon God too, that he should make such a Commandement as this; he should have done well so have made another Law, and penned a nother Gospel, and then I would have kept it: thou layest the blame upon God, for he is God that made all these commandements, these are the commandments of the Lord, Deut. 10.1. The Lord made all the Commandements, and this too, and therefore if thou layest the blame upon this, thou layest the blame upon God.

Fifthly, because thou layest the blame upon ill fortune and bad luck; it was my ill fortune to marry a shrew, and I cannot but fret and lie out of doores. Alas! marriages are made in heaven, and God hath decreed them; thus thou layest the blame upon God: 'twas my ill fortune to miscarry, to light upon such a companion, to be so overtaken as I was, I would willingly have had it to have been otherwise, but I had not the luck of it, and it fell out very unlikly; thus thou committest two evils, thou playest the Atheist in speaking of fortune, like them in the Prophet that prepared a table for fortune, as the word signifies, Esay. 45.11. I say, thou committest two evils, one in calling it Fortune, the other, thou layest the blame upon God, for that which thou profoundly callest fortune and luck, in Psal. 115. 2, *Idolus dicitur, sayes Aristotle*, the very Heathen is able to tell it is God, and the Scripture puts it for Gods providence; and therefore when thou layest the blame upon ill fortune, thou layest the blame upon God; so that hence we may see, that thou canst never be humbled as long as thou pledest on this wise before God: I would very willingly, but I cannot: I say, thou canst never be humbled, because this is to lay the blame upon God. Indeed a child of God, that of unwilling is made willing, he may plead a *cannot* before Christ, without laying the blame upon God. Lord, I cannot humble my proud heart, nor crucifie this bewitching lust of mine, Lord I am not able to doe it, I beseech thee to help me. I say a child of God that is sincerely willing to doe it, may plead a *cannot* before Christ; nay, Christ his promise can no where be applyed, but where the soule can truly plead a *cannot*. He giveth power to the faint, to him that hath no might I will increase strength, Esay. 40.29. when the soule lies tugging and pulling at his heart, and cannot pull it up, striving and endeavouring, and using all holy meanes and cannot, its even faint with pulling and tugging at that which it cannot. As we know evil make any man faint to be clogging at a millstone, which he cannot pull up. When the soule lies thus at a *cannot*, I will give power, sayes Christ, though it have no strength. I will support a child of God

4 Demon.

5 Demon.

Note.

That which men call fortune is Gods providence.

that is willing, may plead a *cannot*, without laying the blame upon God; but then he humbles his soul for his former wil-nots, nay for his too many wil-nots for the present. But thou canst never be humbled while thou livest; if thou pleadest thus a cannot, because thou layest the blame upon God.

Nay sixthly, thou canst not be humbled, because thou dost not duly lay the blame upon God for thy sinnes, but thou findest fault with all Gods proceedings; it is as if thou shouldst say, why does he bid me repent, when he knowes I cannot? why does he yet complaine? *Rom. 9. 19.* he knowes I cannot: why does he woe me to doe that which I cannot? or promise me blessings if I doe, when he knowes that I cannot? why does he help me to more and more knowledge? he does but hurt me with knowledge, and make my sins to be worse, which I cannot forsake. My sinnes are now against knowledge, and Ministers tell me that is worse; this is all that I get by your preaching; nay thou findest fault with all Gods correction: why does he punish me for not doing of that which I cannot? thus thou art farre from being humbled: the truth is, thou mightest get a great deale by knowledge, by exhortation, and reproofs, and corrections, but thou wilt not: is it not easier to leave a sinne when thou knowest it, then when thou art ignorant of it? to be moved when thou art exhorted, then when thou art not admonished at all? to forsake a sinfull course when once God hath imbittered it to thy flesh by corrections; then when it was sweet? Is it not easier to give over drunkenness, when the excesse is bitter to thy stomach, then when it was pleasant? so it is with every other sinne; thou mightest get a great deale of God by every one of Gods dealings, but thou wilt not. *Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more, Esay. 1. 5.* Ye will, sayes God, this is Gods language: he finds fault with thy will, but thou findest fault with his will: Why does he smite me more and more; I cannot but revolt: I cannot doe as he would have me; may be thy lusts are more mannerly then to say thus; but this secret grumbling is in thee, if thou sayest that thou sliest at a cannot, and therefore thou canst not be humbled.

Use 2:
Which discovers the hearts
deceitfulness.

In the second place, if it be thus, the reason why thou dost not amend, is not because thou canst not, but because thou wilt not.

See here then the deceit of thy heart.

If God would give me grace, I would willingly doe any thing; this is nothing but the deceitfulness of thy heart, which is deceitfull above all things. For thy heart does but here lie unto God; I would very faine, if God would enable me: thou lyes; God knowes it is not so: like the wilfull Jewes, they would be Gods people, they would stay themselves upon God; God tells them in effect they lied, *I knew thou wert obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brasse, Isay. 48. 4.* wouldst thou believe me? No; no, I know thou art obstinate and wilt not; so God knowes thou art obstinate. I cannot see this is a sinne to say faith and truth; I cannot see tis a sinne not to pray daily in my family; not to repeat the Sermon every Sabbath: if I could see it were a sinne, I would amend it; no, no, thou lyes unto God, thou art obstinate, and thou wouldst not have it a sinne, and thou wilt not believe it, and if thou didst know it to be one, thou wouldst not reform it.

Secondly, hereby thou dodgest with God, and thou temptest the Lord. If God would give me grace, I would doe it; this is nothing but dallying and trifling with the Lord; for why dost thou not set about it, and try every day what thou canst doe? if God would but quicken me, and perswade me, and compell me, and enable me, I would doe it. Alas thou dodgest with God, as the people of the Gospel, if he will come down from the Crosse, we will believe in him, *Mat. 27. 42.* they had no will to believe in him; this was nothing but dodging: Christ had done enough for them to make them believe if they had any such will, and this was nothing but a pretence of their deceitfull heart.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, hereby thou shuffest off the word, when thou hast heard it. God give me grace to do so as he hath taught me this day, that I cannot myself. God give me grace, and so shuffest it off, and thinkest no more of it: like (those you call) God-fathers in some places, as soon as ever they are charged at the Font to look to the child, and see him brought up in religion, they presently goe and put off the charge on the Father. I pray you take the charge upon you: so thou layest the charge at Gods doore, when God gives thee any duty in charge thou layest it at his doore, as though it stuck there, and there thou letest it lie, not setting about to doe it: God give me grace, repentance is his gift, and if he doe not give it, I cannot repent, I would but I cannot, if he doe not give it: the speech is very good, and becomes a godly soul that makes conscience of the means, to say it, but this is thy shuffling to lay it at Gods doore, as though it stuck there; God tels thee plainly, it does not stick at him, he would have all to come unto repentance, 2 Pet. 3. 9. but thou wilt not come, and this is the deceit of thy heart to shuffle it from thee.

In the third place, Is it so, that the reason why thou dost not amend, is not because thou canst not, but onely because thou wilt not?

Oh then my brethren learn to be humbled.

This point calls for Humiliation.

First, here lies especially the pride of the heart, not in mens cannots, but their will-nots. When a soul does whatsoever it can, reforms as much as it can, uses as many means as it can, and as often as it can, this is not a proud heart, but a proud heart is that especially that sticketh at a will-not. *If ye will not heare, my soul shall weep in secret place for your pride, Jer. 13. 7.* Mark, for your pride, if you will not; he does not say, if you cannot, my soul shall weep for your pride, if ye stick at a cannot, but if ye stick at a will-not. Doe not think this point does lift up mens wills, no, this point does as much beat at the humbling of the will, as any point under heaven, for here lies the pride of the will, and therefore here ye must be humbled.

*Use 3.
Engage to hum-
iliation.*

Secondly, here lies especially the hardning of the heart: when a man sticks at a cannot, he does not more and more harden his heart, but onely sticks at the same hardnesse he had. Beloved, *thou dost then harden thy heart when thou wilt not obey*, and therefore here's most need of thy humbling, to be humbled for thy wil-nots; its said of Pharaoh, he hardened his heart, Exod. 9. 34. what follows? *he would not let the children of Israel goe*: thy will-nots these are they that harden thy heart. Dost thou complaine of the hardnesse of thy heart? O goe and humble thy soul for thy wil-nots, these are the hardners of thy heart, nay let me tell thee, thou hast no hardnesse of heart no more then an infant or a babe, but only that which thy wil-nots have made thee, and therefore thou hast great reason to be humbled for thy wil-nots.

Thirdly, here lies especially the stubbornnesse of the heart; when a child that is commanded by his parents to obey, sticks at a cannot, he obeys as far as he can, but onely he sticks at a cannot, he is not stubborn; stubbornnesse is when one sticks at a will not: *If a man have a stubborn son which will not obey the voice of his father, Deut. 21. 18.* so here lies especially the stubbornnesse of thy heart, and therefore here's most humiliation required.

Fourthly, here lies the greatest despising of the Commandments of God; Authority is never so much despised as when men will not submit to it. A Father is despised when a son will not hear him; and a Master is despised when his servant will not do as he bids him; nay a commandment cannot be despised but by will-nots, it may be omitted, and not obeyed by cannots, but it cannot be despised but by will-nots; *if ye shall despise my statutes, so that ye will not do all my Commandments &c. Levit. 26. 14.* O what infinite reason hast thou to be humbled, that despisest the Lord? He cannot endure that men should despise him; he can put up any other wrong rather then this, that men

should

should despise him: but to be slighted and despised he will not, cannot endure it. *For three transgressions of Judah, and for foure, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, because they have despised the law of the Lord, Amos 2. 4.* he will not turne away the punishment of this sinne, when men doe despise him. What infinite need then hast thou to be humbled under thy wil-not? thou despisest the Commandment.

4 Use. To quicken the thankfulness of the godly. Note.

Here's a word to you that are Godly; O what mercy hath the Lord shewed to you, and how ought you to be thankfull? Never was there such mercy as this, to shew mercy to the wilfull. O woful soul, be his misery never so great, he is not the fit object of mercy: for though misery be mercies object, yet joyn'd with wilfulness its not to be pittied. You have been as wilfull as any, all'ent out of the same rock; the Lord hath not onely helpt you to mercy and grace, but also to a will to take it. When *Lot* was unwilling to goe out of *Sodom* the Lord took him by the arm, and carryed him perforce; now see how the Text expresses it: *The Angels took hold of his hand, the Lord being mercifull unto him, and they brought him forth, Gen. 19. 16.* As if he should say, Would you fain stay? you shall not; the Lord was mercifull to him whether he would or no. So you had no mercy on your selves, but the Lord had; ye were wilfull against mercy, and the Lord fastned mercy on you, whether ye would or no, *He commanded his loving-kindnesse, Psal. 42. 8.* Goe mercy and seize on them, Goe loving-kindnesse, and make them take ye: not as though God converted you against your wills: for when he converted you, your unwillingnesse was taken away, but he made you of unwilling, willing. Oh the infinite mercy of God, and the infinite cause you have to be thankfull!

5 Use. A seasonable Item to all rebellious spirits.

In the fifth place, to you that stand out in your wilfulness still; is it so that ye stick at a wil-not? then be exhorted to be much in abasing your selves before the Lord: your stoutnesse is intollerable, that you dare set up the bryars and thornes against God in battle: down with them and be wise: you harden your own hearts, and disable your selves more and more for repenting of it; ye despise the Lords name by the stubbornnesse of your froward will, you can never be saved except your wills stoop. Before Christ will meddle with a soule, he wil first ask, *Art thou willing?* as he asked the blind man, *What wilt thou that I doe unto thee?* Lord, sayes he, *that I may receive my sight. Luk. 18. 41.* So the first question he puts to thee is, *What wilt thou?* Lord that I may be humble, converted, purged. If thou beest wilfull, though he never take thee in hand, but leave thee to thy selfe, he will be justified in thine eternall confusion.

Psal. 88. 11.

Consider.

First, Is it not enough that thou hast willingly fallen in *Adam*, but thou must willingly stand out again? God now calls thee to means of grace, thou hast stood out once already, and wilt thou be wilfull to stand out again? as *Isaac*, though in a mistake, said to their brethren, is the iniquity of *Peor* too little for us; from the which we are not cleansed to this day? but that ye must turn away this day too? *Jesh. 22. 17.* So may I say, is your willing apostacy in *Adam* too little for you, from the which ye are not cleansed to this day, but ye must willingly stand out against Christ too?

Secondly, consider the very Saints of God that have not halfe so many will nots as you, that stick more truly at a cannot; I would do good but I cannot. I say the very Saints of God they labour to humble themselves every day: *O wretched man that I am sayes Paul, Rom. 7. 24.* does *Paul* cry out, Oh wretched man that I am? he was a Saint of God, and heire of heaven, and sure of blisse; does he cry out of himselfe, that he was wretched? oh what infinite need then hast thou to be humbled! Thou art yet a child of hell, and heire of damnation, wilfull in thy sins to this houre, *Oh wretched man that I am.*

Thirdly, consider the more shamefull ones sin is, the more reason to be humbled;

bled; thy sinne is most sinnefully, for thou corruptest thy self; they have corrupted themselves, Deut. 32.5. so thou corruptest thy self, thy will corrupteth it self.

Nay fourthly, consider there's no greater shame then to make away ones self; thou destroyest thy self; *Oh if thou hadst destroyed thy self.* More credit to be stab'd by the high way, nay more credit to be hanged on a *Patibulum* as a *Malefactor*, then to murder ones self. Put him into a hole, drive a stake through his body, set a Monument of shame on him. (I doe not know whether it be so among you, but it is so in some places, when a man murders himself.) So thou dost murder thy self, nay more thy best self, thou makest away thy soul. Be vex then with thy wicked will, what a mad man am I? I will have this lust, and I will have that passion, like the people, we will have a King over us; no, sayes *Samuel*, the Lord your God is your King; nay, but we will have a King. So thou art wilfull, and thou wilt doe thus; Oh doe not doe it, the Lord hath forbidden thee; Nay, but I will doe it. Thus thou art wilfull, and thou wilt to Hell; vex thine own heart with this. When a wilful *Malefactor* comes afterwards to know that if he had not been wilful, the Judge would have saved him, Oh how will it vex him! he could even rend his own haire, and tear his own flesh; what a mad man was I! I forsook mine own Clergy, so thou foretakest thine own Clergy, thine own mercy, *they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy; Jonab 2.8.* vex thine own heart with it; say I have forsaken mine own mercy.

Wilfull disobedience is soul-murder.
1 Sam. 11. 22.

Fifthly, consider if you would but vex your own souls with this serious consideration, it would make you kick your lusts under foot, and cry out upon them, out upon you, get ye hence, as they cryed out upon their Idols, *Esa. 36. 22.* get ye hence, get ye hence, here is no entertainment for you from henceforth. I forsake mine own mercy as long as I keep you.

Having shewed you, that except your beliefe of this point be rooted in your hearts, ye can never be humbled.

First, because hereby you excuse your selves from all your transgressions besides originall.

Nay secondly, ye excuse your selves for your originall sinne too.

Nay thirdly, you make all your sinnes to be nothing but infirmities, invincible infirmities.

Nay fourthly, you commend your selves more then God.

Nay fifthly, you block up the way to the throne of grace.

Nay sixthly, you cast all the blame upon God.

First, because you lay the blame upon nature.

Secondly, because thou casts the blame on temptations.

Thirdly, because you lay the blame on the times.

Fourthly, because you lay the blame upon the Commandement.

Nay seventhly, you find fault with all the dealings of God.

Oh take heed then of these base pleas and pretences: for,

That I may interpose four or five particulars unnamed.

First, this same pleading is the cause why you are lazie and idle in the use of means; namely, because we suffer our hearts to plead, Oh we cannot doe thus, we cannot beat down this evil; why did the unjust Steward refuse honest labour to work for his living? *I cannot dig,* sayes he, *Luke 16. 2.* therefore he refused to labour; so this is the cause why ye pray no more, and reform no more, &c. Ye set your hearts thus to plead, I cannot doe it: This is the reason why ye are backward to labour, how know ye what may be done if ye would buckle to labour? but alas, *I cannot doe it,* say you; and therefore ye are dead and dull, and sluggish to every good Ordinance. Shake off these *lazy-hearted pleas*, otherwise ye'll never buckle to labour.

Secondly, this same pleading brings up an ill report upon piety and godliness: generally men think Religion is so irksome, and Holiness is impossible! We cannot be Saints, and we are not able to be so holy as this pleads, bring an evil report on Religion. Like the Spies that brought an evil report upon *Canaan*. Num. 13. 23. What sayes the Text in the verse going before it, we be not able to get it, say they, ver. 31. this made the rest of the people think hardly of their going into *Canaan*: they generally thought it was to but a little end. Oh they were not able to win it: so ye bring an evil report upon the *Heavenly Canaan*, the flesh is too strong, the devil too strong, temptations too strong, and its impossible to grapple with them all, we are not able to get mastery. I say this brings up an evil report on Religion, ye discourage one another. I cannot get quickning, and I cannot deny my self. Ye bring up an evil report upon these duties, and ye are guilty of the evil report that goes up and down.

Thirdly, this same pleading is a murmuring against God. *q.d.* Why does God give me such Commandments that I cannot observe? Why does he charge me to root out a lust that I cannot root out? this is to murmur against God. Like those murmuring Disciples in the Gospel, when they were told they must feed upon Christ, and as the *body* feeds upon *wheat*, so your *soules* must feed upon Christ; this is a hard saying, who can heare it, say they? Christ construed this speech to be murmuring. Joh. 6. 60. 61. We cannot do this, and this is so hard we are not able to do it. The text sayes it was murmuring, When Jesus knew in himselfe that his Disciples murmured at it, that pleading of a cannot was a murmuring. So when thou grumblest on this manner, I cannot walk thus, I cannot believe thus, &c. this is to murmur against God, my this will bring thee to Apostacy at last, if thou suffer thy heart to plead thus. May be now thou art a forward professor, yet beest thou never so forward and favourest any lust, and I cannot give it over, I cannot root it out, &c. I say this will break thy neck at the last, if thou dost not looke to it. So it was with those forenamed Disciples, they were very forward Professors, for they were the Disciples of Christ sayes the text: yet those Disciples, they went away back and walked no more with Christ, verse 66: their pleadings of their cannots, drove them to Apostacy; they went away back. So thou wilt go away back, and fall into Apostacy if thou suffer thy heart to stand pleading of cannots in this manner.

Fourthly, this is the sawiest excuse of all excuses, many sinners excuse their own selves but there is more mannerliness in all their excuses: I pray thee have me excused, sayes one, I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I pray thee have me excused; sayes the other, I have bought a purchase, I pray thee have me excused. These though wretched excusers and turned out from all mercy; yet they were somewhat more mannerly, but I cannot come sayes thou, I have married a Wife, and I cannot come, Luke 14. 20. this is a most sawcy excuse, thou tellest Christ in plaine termes, I cannot come, *q.d.* ye may even save your labour to invite, for this is short and long, as we say, I cannot come, This I put in onely by the by.

I have shewed you some of the deceits of the heart in pleading these cannots.

First how it lies unto God.

Secondly, how it dallies with God.

And then I shewed you the strong reason we have to be humbled under these will-nots.

First, because here chiefly lies the pride of the heart, not in mens cannots, but in their will-nots. Jer. 17. 17.

Secondly, here lies chiefly the hardning of the heart, Exod. 9. 34. 35.

Thirdly, here lies chiefly the stubbornesse of the heart, Deut. 21. 18.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, here lies chiefly the great despising of the Commandments of God, Levit. 26. 15.

Fifthly, now to goe on, here lies the reason why Divines say that the conversion of a sinner is a harder work then the Creation of Heaven and Earth: for thus they doe reason; when God created Heaven and Earth, he had nothing to resist him; as he had nothing to help him, (he made all of nothing,) so he had nothing to resist him. There was but one difficulty in the Creation of Heaven and Earth, but in the conversion of a sinner there be two difficulties.

First, here is the same difficulty that was in creation, for God makes a Convert of nothings; he had nothing to help him, not one thought, not one desire, not one good inclination: and therefore the Scripture calls it a new Creation; whosoever is in *Christ is a new creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. that is, is created anew. And therefore there was nothing praeexistent, no not one thought, all the thoughts of men are only evill, and that continually. So there is the same difficulty, that was in the creation of Heaven and Earth: and then,

Secondly, there is another difficulty more then there was in the creation: for as there was nothing praeexistent to help, so there was nothing to resist. But here is something to resist, the will it resisteth: now the cannot does not resist. No, the bestowing of new powers is no more then another Creation, but the changing of the will is more then another Creation; for the will it resisteth, yea and it sets all the soul a resisting. Carnall reason resisteth, carnall desires they resist, all the soul it resisteth: and the greatest resistance of all is the resistance of the will; for the will is the utmost strength of the soul. And therefore here lies the infinite difficulty of the conversion of a sinner, namely in the turning of the will: it requireth more power, then was required to the creation of Heaven and Earth. God put himselfe forth more when he converted a sinner, then when he created a World; and therefore the Scripture calls the day of conversion of mens wills, the day of his power. Thy people shall be *willing in the day of thy power*, Psal. 110. 3. In the day of thy power, marke, its called a day of thy power, when he converteth a people to be willing. Why? because the will did resist him; nay God had his own selfe to resist him; anger steps in his way to resist him, Convert him not Lord, his wilfulness hath anger'd thee; Justice: steps in to resist him; save him not Lord, his sinnes have dishonoured thee. Nay he had his mercy to resist him; Mercy steps in, Lord he hath abused me, save him not. Indeed had a sinner yielded as soone as he sinned, mercy would not resist him; but mercy had beene dealing with him, and he abused all mercy. And therefore he had mercy to resist, nay and wisdom one would think to resist too; what a wilfull foole? pikie him not Lord; there is no reason he should be pittied, if he will perish let him perish. I say, in the conversion of a sinner, as there was nothing to assist him, so there was all to resist. The will does resist him, nay God had himselfe (as I may so speak) to resist him, yea, and mercy to resist him: it was not so in the creation of Heaven and Earth. The creature had never provoked God not, to create it, but the sinner hath provoked God never to convert him: so that now God must have power over himself, if he mean to convert him. Oh then what infinite reason hast thou to be humbled: thou resistest God, as *Stephen* told the Jewes, *you have alwayes resisted the holy Ghost*, Acts 7. 51. so thou hast resisted Gods spirit, yea, thy will does resist him, & that is the strongest thing to resist in the world. His word comes to convert thee, & thou dost resist his motions, his mercyes, his corrections, his ordinances, & all holy means to convert thee, thou dost resist them; nay his spirit contendeth within, and thou dost resist him.

I gave you five things to consider, what it is to stick at your will not: I beseech you consider yet farther.

First, If you will not, Gods Ministers have discharged their duties, and
H h h 3 hav:

have left your blood on your own heads, they can goe no further if you will not; the Groom can but carry the Seede unto watering, as we say, if he will not drink, he cannot helpe it: so they can't helpe it, your blood lies upon your own heads, they have discharged their duties. When *Abraham's* servant objected, and how if the woman will not? *Abraham* he answers, if the woman will not be willing, then thou shalt be cleare of my oath, *Gen. 24.8*. So Lord, how if they will not, may we say nay if they will not, let them choose, thou art cleare: the Lord hath sworn us to preach and teach, and exhort, and reprove, and invite you to grace; but if we doe so, and you will not, we can't helpe it, your blood is on your own heads: we have discharged our oath and our duty, we would be glad that you would; but if now you will not, we have discharged our duties. Nay,

Secondly, if you will not, the Gospel hath delivered its errand, ye are guilty of your own everlasting perdition; the Gospel hath delivered its message, and this is the message, *Whosoever will, let him take of the Water of life freely, Revel. 22.17*. This message hath been delivered to you often; its the last exhortation in the whole Bible: like one in the evening of the market, he is even about to take down his standing, I have told you my lowest price, if you will have it, take; if not, choose, I must be gone. So this is the end of Gods book: as if he should say, I am even a closing up my book, speak quickly, if ye will, come and welcome; but if not, I am gone. If yet you will not, you will not submit: nay but you will have your lusts, and your stomachs will not come down, you will not stir a jot beyond your painted civility and formality, you will not be more conscionable then you have been, nor frequent holy duties more then you have done, nor get more holinesse then you have done; then if Wil wil have wil, Wil must win woe. Nay,

Thirdly, if you will not, the blood of *Jesus Christ* hath done that it came for: it came to tender you mercy upon very easie terms; to offer you grace and pardon, and salvation and Heaven; and all upon very free cost. If you had rather that sinne should be your master, then that *Christ* should be your master; if you will not hearken and obey, I say the blood of *Christ* hath done that which it came for; and your soules shall know ye shall be worse offered: you have knowledge of the truth, *Christ* hath offered you very faire, and you cannot but know it, and yet you will not submit to it; assure your selves you shall be worse offered, for next to your wil nots, comes *Christ* leaving you desolate. As *Christ* told *Jerusalem*, *I would, but you would not: what follower?* Behold your house is left unto you desolate, *Mat. 23.37,38*. So *Christ* would and you would not; he hath given you gracious offers, but you will not: therefore you may look to be worse offered, your soules to be desolate. Nay,

Fourthly, if you will not, ye murder your own soules: when a man hath murdered himself, the Coroner comes and he does sit on him, and he enquires, and he examines, and who hath murdered this man? and when he finds that it was himself that did murder him, so he concludes, and that man is branded for murdering of himself; so you murder your own soules. The *Jewes* their soules were all murdered; well, when the Coroner sate on them, he concluded they had murdered themselves: *O Israel thou hast destroyed thy self, Hof. 13.9*. So if the Coroner sit on thee, its most certain he shall find thou hast murdered thine own self; O what a company of you is there, your soules are quite murdered; one in one sinne, another in another: who hath murdered these men? not God, he was ready to help them; not the Minister, he did use all meanes to save them; he hath not been wanting to teach them and exhort them. No, your own selves have murdered your selves; you would be carnall, and you would be proud, and you would not lie down to the word: when the Coroner sits on you, he must necessarily conclude, you have murdered your selves; your own wils have condemned you.

You

You remember what exhortations we gave you, as ever you regard mercy to humble your selves. We told you the first question Christ asks is, *Will ye be willing*, as he ask'd the blind man, *What wilt thou?* Luk 18. 41: if thou beest not willing, he'll never take thee in hand: the subjects of the Kingdom of grace must be willing. Christ will never come into a soul, where his will may be affronted by another; Heaven cannot bear two Suns, nor one heart two wills; if thy will be not crucified, and made agreeable to Christs, Christ cannot dwell in thy heart, there would be two contrary wills in one heart; and this cannot be: if Christ come, he will have these and these lusts turned away, which thou wouldst fain keep; he will have this done and that done, and thou wilt not: two contrary wills can never stand together. No, if thy will be contrary to Christ, Christs will will be contrary to thine: if thy will be to do that which will offend him, his Will will be to do that which will vex thee: *If ye will walke contrary to me, I will also walke contrary to you, Levit. 26. 23.* 34. No, no, your wills they must bow, or Christ will not take you in hand: the will is the generall presupposition of all the whole Gospel: the summe of the whole Gospel is this, to deny a mans selfe, and to take up Christs Crosse and to follow him: now see the will is presupposed as ready; if any man will come after me, let him deny himselfe, &c. Luk 9. 23. he're a commandement of the Gospel, he're a promise, he're a one passage but presupposes the Will: Christ will not open his mouth except thy will be brought down.

Calum non passitur duos solos.

A few words to you that are the redeemed of the Lord, and so I'll make a conclusion of all. I pray God smite home this point into your hearts: for though your wills be tamed and subdued in regard of the wicked, you do not stand out as they do, nevertheless observe you this point: there's many a Canaanite that remaines still in our bosomes, that we may thank our own wills for not rooting out. We do not put our selves forth so much as we might, nor labour in the Lord so seriously as we might, nor walke so close as we might: oh beloved these same wills do us all the mischief that ever is done us. For

An awakening for the redeemed of the Lord.

First, We never sin against Gospel but onely upon wills: indeed we sin against the law in every of our cannots, but we never sin against the Gospel, but onely in our wills. The Gospel requires nothing of a believer but that which is given him, and therefore we never sin against the Gospel, but onely in our wills: this is the voice of the Gospel, *ἐὰν τις θέλῃ* if any man will, John 7. 17. Oh then let us stir up our selves, shall we sin against Gospel, and be angry against mercy?

Note.

Secondly, we can never displease God, but onely upon wills. I speak onely upon Gods people; we can never staine our acceptance with God, but onely in our wills: though we cannot but sinne in our prayers, but sinne in our duties, but sinne in every thing that we do; yet this does not staine our acceptance with God, nor blemish it one whit, when God hath our wills; for if there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which a man hath not, 2 Cor. 8. 12. But when God would have us mend this, and we will not, and reform that, and we will not, we let security and sloth break into our wills; here and here onely do we displease our good God: this is a main thing to consider, is there but one thing wherein we may displease God, and shall we not take heed of that?

Thirdly, Conscience can never condemn us but only upon wills; when a child of God finnes, and he cannot otherwise choose, his conscience can never condemn him. A child of Gods cannots, be they never so many, nay if they were millions more then they are, they never hinder sincerity; sincerity is rooted onely in the will; it is our wills that is the breach of sincerity, and therefore here onely the conscience condemns: does our conscience reproch us in our wayes? let us thank our wills for this: have we little peace? it is because of the rebellion of our wills. Ah, ah! this is an infinite evil, for it

hinders our comforts, it hinders our boldnesse of accesse to the Throne of grace, it hinders our patience, and every good duty, this does us infinite hurt; it stabs to the heart, and wounds our very soul, when our conscience affordeth little peace, O it hinders very grievously; all this is long of our *wil nots*, because we will not be so carefull and so circumspect as we might.

Fourthly, God can never be so angry with us but only upon *wil nots*: its true, as long as a man is not in Christ, all the score stands, and God is angry for all; but God is angry for nothing but *wil nots* in his children, as *Nehemiah* sayes of Gods people in *Judah*, they would not heare, therefore God gave them up into the hand of the people of the land, *Nehem. 9. 30*. God is not angry with his people for cannets, but onely for their *wil nots*; it is for our *wil nots* that God does not so goe out with our Ministers, nor so quicken his word to your hearts. Is it for our *wil nots* that he threatens our land, and begins to abridge us of our spirituall food, and shewes ominous signes of his departing away from us; and are we not even sick unto death for these *wil nots*? We complaine of our deadnesse, and what trow we is the cause, but our *wil nots*? we complaine of our corruptions and of the leanenesse of our souls, and whom may we thank, but our *wil nots*? we might grow more then we doe, what lets us but our *wil nots*? What makes some of us goe down the winde, as we say, but because we will not stand on our guards? These, these, brethren, these *wil nots* of ours are the reason why God is provoked against us. O let us put forth our selves, and shake of these *wil nots*, least anger break out, and there be no remedy; for ones crooked servant to be stubborne, it is but his kind, but for ones child to be stubborne, this angers the father indeed,

FINIS

A Table of the Contents.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

7 Demonstrations to prove it *for the Sword of the Magistrate,*
Demon 1: The wicked think they have *Because though a carnal man can*

12. They will not say whether they can do it in time and in this manner. If
they cannot do it, let us know so we may help them.

4. They will not use the power which The ground further proved by Par-

6. Their cannot is voluntary.

The first Ground of the Doctrine.

This appears by these following considerations

his will, *ibid.* The second Ground.
2. If a man can do no more than he does. 2. Ground. Every wicked man is flesh

which he cannot, ibid.

could. 8 cannot, when as nothing but an impossibility is a cannot.

5. If a man will not do that which he | 4. He doth voluntarily nails himself,

ness, thanke himself for his perishing. 9
 Arguments to prove the first ground. 10
 wer which he hath, 11
 Conclude There is more in a wicked

2. Argu. Because God doth complaine man then by reason of sinfulness

2. Because of the small size of the room

Because though a carnall man can

time and in this manner.

The ground further proved by Pa-

iculars.

the outward acts of the members, ibid.

2. Part. Every man hath naturall aff
fection in him by which he may

more then he doth, and shall more
will then he doth.

3. God hath given to every man naturall
 skill counsell and naturall Reason

Prudence,

4. That is first in order which is natural, and afterwards that which is sp

ritual, and if a man sick there,
sticks at a will-not.

The second Ground.

full and negligent,

1. Demon. *Every wicked man do*

2. He makes every little difficulty

cannot, when as nothing but an impo

3. A slothfull man turns his very ab-

4. He doth voluntarily nail himself,

unto Cannots, ibid
5. He putteth forth by helmes that pe

wer which he hath,

Conclusion: There is more in a wicked
man than by reason of stinginess.

1947

The Table

putteth forth,

16

Arguments to prove this.

Its a signe it is in him,

ibid.

1. Argu. Because When God doth convert a sinner, he doth not put in new powers and faculties into the soul, ibid.

2. Because he can shew as great power otherwise, ibid.

3. Because he can shew it too when he list, 17

4. Because the rod is able to whip it out of him, ibid.

5. Because he can do an hundred times more when he is pleased, ibid.

6. Because he will shew it in Hell, viz. That it was in him to do more then he did, 18

3 Ground. A wicked man Will not set himselfe to use all the means that he may, 19

Demon. A wicked man may use the means that God appointed as means, 52

1 Argu. Because 'tis the very nature of means to come between ones can and his cannot. 20

2. Because God doth not exhort men like a company of stocks and stones, but as men that are edifiable by his words, 21

3. Because Gods anger is very reasonable, ibid.

4. Because Gods offer of his kingdome to the wicked is serious, ibid.

5. Because Gods reproofes are very equal, 22

Conclusi. His condemnation must be wilfull, that will not use all the means, ibid.

Proved by three Arguments.

1 Argu. God Will not help that man by a miracle to go, that hath legs to go, and will not, ibid.

2. God will not bate a farthing of the price he sets thee at, 23

3. God will never be brought out of his walks to shew thee any mercy, or give thee any grace, ibid.

Conclusi. Gods Kingdome cannot be attained without a diligent use of the means, 24

Reasons of it.

1 Reaf. Because heaven is an end, and an end can never be gotten without means, ibid.

2. God hath annexed it to the means, ib.

3. Every soul must give an account before God how he hath used the means, ibid.

4. God will not set up another door into heaven for any man in the world, ibid.

Further proofes and encouragements to use the means.

1. Some of the means that God hath appointed, you may do them without labour, 25

2. Some of the means that God hath appointed, are easier then them, ibid.

3. Some of the means are easier yet, ib.

4. Some of the means of grace, its harder to omit them then to use them, ibid.

5. Some of the means of grace, be they hard, yet they are but hard, they are not impossible for you to use, ibid.

Objections.

The first Objection's drawn from the Scriptures which say they cannot.

The Scripture speaks of five cannots, 1.

Of a naturall cannot, 2. Of a deliberate cannot, 3. Of a judicall cannot, 4. Of a compounded cannot, 5. Of a humbling cannot. 25

Thou wouldest (as thou pretendst) but thou canst not. Perhaps its the will of thy conscience, and not the will of thy heart, 2. May be its a copulative will, Repentance and some lust, Godlinesse and some lust, 3. May be thou hast a wouling will, this is no will but onely a voluety, 4. May be thou hast a generall Metaphysicall Will, but to come to particulars, there thou wilt not, 5. thou hast no true Will, because if thou didst Will, thou couldst, 27

Thou desirest to do it, but art not able.

Who can tell best what is in thee, God or thy own heart? But the reason of this mistake is, 1. Thou hast positive or

thinking desires, thou think'st thou desirest, 2. Thou hast ignorant desires, 3. thou hast wandering desires, and therefore thou art mistaken, 29

Thou resolvest and hast good purposes, but oh thou canst not performe them.

These purposes thou speakest of are onely willing for the future, 1. Because its onely to stuffe off the willing for the present, 2. This will for hereafter is no will, because its gone without Gods,

The Table.

3. It is no will, because thou shalt misse those suppositions that thou wilt oft upon.

First, thou supposest thou shalt have fewer temptations hereafter, 2. Thou supposest thou shalt be fitter hereafter.

3. Thy will for hereafter is no will but a mockery.

Thou labourdest to serve God, and to be saved.

Is this to labour for grace and heaven, when thou labourest so idly & wherefore thy impenitency is wilfull thy damnation's wilfull, and thy ruine wilfull.

Hence also it followes, 1. That your destruction is from self, 2. Your destruction is iust, 3. Your destruction is inexcusable, 4. Your destruction is unavoidable, 5. Your destruction is pitiable, 6. Your destruction is grievous.

Application.

Use 1. of Instruction Thou canst never be humbled unlesse thou believe this truth; a man is never humbled as long as he excuses himself. Now.

1 Excuse. First thou excuseth thy self for all Transgressions besides original, ib.

2. Now thou excuseth thy selfe from original sin too; Lord I would be without sin, but I cannot, ibid.

3. Nay thou excuseth thy self for every sin; thou takest all thy sins to be nothing but infirmities, ibid.

4. Nay thou commendest thy selfe more then God, ibid.

5. Nay thou canst not so much as pray to God for a will: thou art so proud that thou conceivest thou hast that already.

6. Nay thou layest all the blame upon God, ibid.

1. Demon. First, because you cast the blame upon nature, its my nature and I cannot, ibid.

2. Secondly, thou dost cast the blame upon temptations; its my hard hap to fall upon temptations, ibid.

3. Thirdly, thou layest the blame upon the Times, the times are very bad, ib.

4. Fourthly, thou layest the blame upon this Commandement. If it were any Commandement but this, I would do it,

9. Fifthly, thou layest the blame upon ill fortune and bad luck,

6. Nay, sixthly thou findest fault with Gods proceedings,

Use 2. This discovers the detestableness of thy heart, ibid.

First, thou wouldst very faine, if God would enable thee; but thy heart doth but lye unto God, ibid.

Secondly, hereby thou dodgest with God, and temptest the Lord, ibid.

Thirdly, hereby thou shuffl'st off the word when it is best heard is, 37

Use 3. This point calls for great humiliation; for 1. Here lyes especially the pride of the heart, not in words & not but their will not, ibid.

2. Here lyes especially the hardning of the heart, ibid.

3. Here lyes especially the stubbornness of the heart, ibid.

4. Here lyes the greatest despising of the Commandments of God, ibid.

Use 4. To quicken the thankfulness of the Godly, 38

A seasonable item to all Rebellious spirits, ibid.

1 Is it not enough that thou hast willingly fallen in Adam, but thou must willingly stand out again? ibid

2. Consider the very Saints of God that have not halfe so many will-nots as you, that stick more truly at a cannot, ibid.

3. Consider the more shamefull ones sin us, the more reason to be humbled, ib.

Nay fourthly consider there's no greater shame then to make away ones self 39

5. Consider if you would but vex your own soul with this serious considerations, it would make you kick your lusts under foot, ibid.

The danger of base pleas & pretences.

1. This same pleading is the cause why you are lazy and idle in the use of the means. viz. because you suffer your hearts to plead, oh we cannot do it, ibid.

2. This same pleading brings up an evil report upon piety and Godliness, 40

3. This same pleading is a murmuring against God, & why does God give me such commandments that I cannot?

4. This is the savriest excuse of all excuses, ibid.

The Table

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| <p>5. <i>Nay, here lies the reason why Divines say, that the conversion of a sinner is an harder work then the creation of heaven and earth, first because,</i> 41
 <i>Here is the same difficulty that was in creation, for God makes a convert of nothing,</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> <p>2. <i>As there was nothing preexistent in the creation to help, so there was nothing to resist; but here is something to resist, the will it resisteth,</i> <i>ibid.</i>
 The danger of sticking at a will not is further cleared.</p> <p>1. <i>If you will not, Gods Ministers have discharged their duties, and have left your blood on your own hands,</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> | <p>2. <i>If you will not, the Gospel hath delivered its errand, ye are guilty of your own everlasting perdition,</i> 42</p> <p>3. <i>Nay thirdly, if you will not, the blood of Jesus Christ hath done that is came for,</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> <p>4. <i>If you will not, you murder your own souls,</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> <p><i>A seasonable Item to the redeemed of the Lord, that they take heed of will not; for,</i> 43</p> <p>1. <i>We never sin against Gospel, nor despise God, but only upon will-nots,</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Conscience can never condemn us, nor God can never be angry with us, but only upon Will-nots,</i> <i>ibid.</i></p> |
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The end of the Table.

